THE COMMONWEAL

A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts and Public Affairs

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MR. SHAW'S SWAN SONG

ANYONE who heard Bernard Shaw's address to an audience of curious New Yorkers must have gone away feeling pretty bad. It was a speech by an old and weary man, who in all charity ought not to be permitted to go about making a fool of himself. Possibly some of the newspapers cannot well be blamed for taking advantage of one who in his prime could have matched wits with the lot of them, but the bystander who retains a certain amount of reverence for human nature, in all its forms, will feel a measure of disgust with the spectacle he has witnessed. Yet there is a sense in which precisely this demonstration was needed as the final word of the perplexing and challenging Shavian message to mankind.

The New York speech was a cluttered and rambling dissertation on ideas which have meant a great deal to Shaw. From among these we wish to select one peculiarly applicable to the present moment. Professing to believe that the American Constitution is the outcome of "ages of anarchism" during which powers have fought so stubbornly to displace other powers that the result in the end was the destruction of all effective governing power and the establishment of the "private czar," he ended by hoping that the political instinct manifest in American life would eventually breed a race of "statesmen" able to concentrate power in their hands. The endless digressions from this point, some of them pathetically feeble, need not concern us here. It is sufficient to attend to the issue, which is after all the serious core of Mr. Shaw's life-work.

Essentially Shavian Socialism has precious little to do with the ideas which once made orators of Lasalle and Marx. Not inspired by the conviction that brotherly love will eventually prevail, it is also very little interested in the common man. The sources of Shaw's point of view may be found in indignation aroused by the moral offenses of the bourgeois. Probably one can understand best by referring to Mr. Chesterton, who sponsors a wholly different social doctrine. In a recent essay, the creator of Father Brown describes how he came upon a lady philanthropist who demanded that the well-to-do care for the children of the poor as they do for their own. He thereupon became decidedly angry. If, he wrote, the poor lived under a decent civilization, they would be enabled to care for their own children in a decent and satisfactory way. And surely that is good reasoning if one shares, with Lasalle and Karl Marx, faith in brotherly love

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and the common man. Of course Mr. Chesterton repudiates the religion of the one and the materialistic engineering program of the other. But in all three men the reaction to the moral offenses of the bourgeois is essentially the same. Shaw for his part remains the companion-in-arms of Nietzsche and Ibsen—of those whose revolt against the industrial order expressed itself in an act of devotion to the exceptional and self-governing intelligence.

Therefore Shaw's outline of social history became something like this: Mankind, waging a futile and foolish war for liberty understood as individualistic anarchy rather than collective release from trouble through order, has ignored the evident trend of human development. For this must be, he thinks, the release of intelligence from its shackles, either through a "superman" yet to be or through collective decision to set apart the reason and cultivate it. But what is intelligence? Never before in history was this question more disturbing. For if any characteristic of the situation in which we all live is evident, it is that what men have defined as intelligence is singularly without administrative power. Professor Einstein has declared, to be sure, that the world ought to confide its affairs to a group of select minds. But whether the chosen guides are to be Dr. Piccard who soars to the stratosphere and Dr. Beebe who plunges to the depths is by no means clear. Even more disturbing is the fact that intelligence seems to evaporate with time. It did so most decidedly in Nietzsche's case, but the spectacle of normal decay furnished by Mr. Shaw is even more discouraging. For this is that to which we all come—self-advertisement of the hollowness of our own pride, flaunted half unwittingly. There is no satisfaction for any of us in this diagnosis; there is only an unmistakable and sobering truth.

The obvious value of Shavian philosophy lies in the teaching that humanity needs, and needs bitterly, an institutionalized intelligence granted and possessing authority. To believe that the "common man" has power to rule his own life or can evolve collective ability to achieve the good of all is to make an easy and blind denial of the facts marshalled in such impressive numbers by Shaw and his peers. The average man has always made a mess of everything. To hold, on the other hand, that he can generate intelligence worthy of the name is even more certainly nonsense, because while everybody has a conscience no one, in the strict sense, has brains. Many can make a machine, a poem or even a pretty good speech. But the fundamental questions upon an answer to which any vital action depends resist the human mind as steel does a quill pen. The intelligence which responds to them must come from beyond. It is either missing or it is perennially the fruit of the Word that dwells among men. The central authority around which our weal and our woe gravitate must either be a Rock possessing the firmness of eternity or a banner waving amid the floods.

WEEK BY WEEK

AS WE write, Europe appears to be somewhat calmer. The Nazi government has apparently curtailed some of its barnstorming activities; M. Herriot has been the excellent choice of his government as envoy to the United States; and the Polish authorities have disavowed outbursts which threatened to disturb international peace. In so far as Germany is concerned, we permit ourselves to hope that the worst of what was virtually a revolution is now over, and that the quotation which follows from an address delivered by Dr. Julius Curtius on the occasion of the departure of Ambassador Sackett may be justified by future developments. Dr. Curtius, who will be remembered as the distinguished moderate foreign minister of his country under Chancellor Bruening, declared: "Mr. Ambassador, you are leaving Germany at the beginning of a new epoch. In the realm of nature, relief of polaric tension is usually accompanied by manifestations of violence, such as thunder and lightning. Those who know this will not be surprised to find that the overthrowal of political conditions in Germany is taking place with a good deal of turmoil. And you will, I know, agree with me when I say: Germany is struggling toward a new order. The goal is not destruction, chaos or negation of values, but social, industrial and national reconstruction." These words are based, of course, upon hope. Yet they are not unjustified. A nation possessing the vitality of Germany, permissibly believes that while there is life there is hope.

Where There Is Life

DURING the past month, pleaders for a managed currency have undoubtedly made headway. The main reason for this success is the feeling that the price level cannot be raised without some readjustment between money values and commodity or service values. Granted the international trade set-up now existing, and granted also the fixed charges to be borne by realty owners, power users, industries and tax-payers, uniform readjustment to lower price levels seems out of the question. Long ago the exceedingly great difficulties of such readjustment were foreseen, but it was really only the bank holiday and the implied abandonment of the gold standard which afforded clinching proof. Now more and more people are beginning to think that money must be permitted to seek its own level in a world of lower prices. The problem cannot be approached by automatically decreeing a lower gold content of the dollar, but—specie payments having been abandoned—by creating adequate credit for reconstruction and refinancing projects, leaving the currency to drift, under management, to its own natural level. Management implies governmental ability to curb expenditures and to manipulate financial operations. Since we may now assume that

The Advantages of Poverty

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the Roosevelt administration is in the saddle, there is room for optimism regarding the quality of the management, provided that the Federal Reserve Bank is adequately staffed. To those of our readers interested in the problem we recommend a pamphlet entitled "How to Restore Values," by Ambrose W. Benkert (John Day Company. $.25). It is as lucid and effective a statement of the situation as we have seen.

Concerning Pan-America

WE ARE glad to quote and endorse the following passage from an editorial in the New York *Herald Tribune*: "The celebration of Pan-American Day offers a propitious occasion for taking stock of our relations with the other Americas. Particularly it calls for a recognition of the need for a more realistic attitude toward the Latin American nations, one that will take more account of the actualities in the situation. In the past we have had too much vague talk of "good-will," as though benevolent words alone could catch that elusive sentiment so necessary to a more fruitful understanding among those who share this continent for better or for worse. If it is to be for better, it can only be by facing frankly and calmly the obstacles to our common aspirations for peace and the mutual interchange of goods and ideas. The honeymoon of Pan-Americanism is long since over, and it is now a question of making adjustments all around, and such adjustments imply concessions and sacrifices by all parties."

Paul Claudel

WE REGRET that the time has come when Paul Claudel is to leave the United States, which he has learned to know well and which in turn regards him as an unusually desirable guest. Years tell in every life, and the duties of the French Embassy have not been easy in these times, so that it must be with genuine relief that M. Claudel turns to simpler conditions in Belgium. Naturally it has never been forgotten that the retiring ambassador is a very great poet indeed, whose work is in part available even to those who read no French. Catholic literary effort in particular has profited by his initiative, spirit and example; and though he is not a journalist whose collaboration could have been invited by THE COMMONWEAL, we are happy to remember numerous inquiries which followed articles published here concerning the great Claudel plays. It is a source of regret at this time that none of those dramas was presented in the United States during his residence here. One would have relished in particular the chance to see a performance of "Columbus," which musical play in several respects honors America and which was produced so effectively in Berlin. But there is missing here an "art theatre" capable of staging such work in a fitting manner. After all, the work of Claudel, like much else in the literature of poetic drama, demands a reader more than a spectator. And of readers there will never be any dearth.

Important Announcement!

THESE are economy days, and THE COMMONWEAL is perforce driven to make certain changes which will result in very considerable saving without inconvenience or disappointment to its readers. First, the date of publication will be altered with the next issue, which will appear on Friday rather than on Wednesday as heretofore. This is to be done in order to permit sales at churches on the Sunday nearest the date of issue, which has hitherto been difficult owing to the time needed to reach post offices in the Far West. Incidentally the change will be much to the advantage of the editors, who will have opportunity to read news published in the first part of the week during which they write. The format of the magazine will also be a slightly different one. By effecting a hardly noticeable change in size, manufacturing costs can be appreciably reduced. We hope that those of our readers who keep bound files of THE COMMONWEAL will not be irritated. If it had been possible to avoid this step, we should not have taken it. But in view of the magnificent response to our appeal for help—a response which will be adequately chronicled next week—we feel sure that the alternations which we here announce will be cheerfully accepted.

Commissioner Bolan

THE PUBLIC uneasiness and discontent at the resignation of New York's Commissioner of Police, Edward P. Mulrooney, have been allayed, at least in part, now that the identity of his successor has been revealed. In the three years of his office, Mr. Mulrooney proved himself the best of our police commissioners, by unanimous consent. A policeman from the ranks, who knew policemen, he emerged also as a New Yorker who knew New York, and a human being who knew humanity. Competent, unostentatious and incorruptible, he was not content with doing the traditional job very well; he widened it to include a systematic humanitarian and social service, especially among the young, of which we on this magazine have not been alone in speaking with admiration. It has been generally said, without authoritative contradiction, that his resignation was politely "forced" by his political superiors; and though he goes to head the very important state alcoholic board in Albany, the public has not been reconciled to the shift. Now, however, it appears that Mr. Mulrooney is to be followed by a man very like himself. James S. Bolan is also a "ranker" and a stickler for discipline. He had been steadily advanced on merit through a long police career of thirty-six years. He disavows any political affiliation, thus actually going his predecessor one better, and promises to follow the latter's policies on principle. These facts, and the Mayor's strong charge to him to "bar politics absolutely," while they do not diminish wonder over the cause of Mr. Mulrooney's departure, do give the public exactly the kind of reassurance it needs.

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ONE OF the most heart-breaking of the stories brought forth by the depression was printed in a New York newspaper last week with details that seem to preclude the possibility that it had not been carefully investigated. There have been cases of hungry children, of helpless elderly women, of men falling down starving in the street; but this story of the careless heartlessness of the fortunate, and the chivalry and delicate gratitude of the hopeless and dispossessed, deserves to rank with any of them. Briefly, an order of Catholic nuns who conduct a sanitarium near New York, have given harborage, in one corner of their property, to penniless vagrants; these men, who are fed at the convent kitchen, and do odd jobs when any present themselves, have built their own shacks, and maintained themselves quietly and harmlessly. It is the express testimony of the chief of police of the locality, and of the superior of the convent, that they have been orderly and given no trouble. However, there is a fashionable golf course across the road, and its frequentors, as well as some of the landed gentry of the countryside (not all, to the honor of human nature) objected, in terms the intelligent reader can shape for himself, to the "public menace" which the poor wretches represented. A signed petition was sent to the superior, who read it to the men with the explanation that it must be referred to the archbishop; she herself, she told them, wished them to stay. That afternoon, they fired their little hovels and quietly departed. They would not embarrass the friend who had treated them so kindly by remaining; their thanks, and their good-by, were told in the smoke from the ruins of their poor, offending shelters. This was on Good Friday. Let those of us who sometimes feel that hardship is turning our people everywhere into professional panhandlers, ponder this beautiful lesson of gratitude, and ask ourselves if perhaps charity must be perfect in spirit to elicit a lofty response instead of a mean and calculating one. Let those of us who commit the sin of hating the destitute for the marks of their destitution, in Hamlet's words, "Go pray."

Text from the News

OF DR. HENRY VAN DYKE, whose death at an advanced age was reported on April 10, the most important thing to be said is that he understood the art of being a gentleman. This art, according to the rules established in placid days before the war, dedicated the individual to a moderate amount of religion, an interest in the poets, a love of nature and of country, and a measure of ability to write and talk agreeably. Concede the rightness of these notions and Dr. Van Dyke was a veritable Sir Philip Sidney. His Presbyterianism was earnest enough to support a reasoning belief in the integrity and principles of the New Testament, and sufficiently broad-minded to foster resentment of bigotry in all forms. Dr. Van Dyke's irate attacks upon certain aspects of the 1928 campaign were prompted by deep antipathy to the kind of religion manifested, and of course by what can only be termed good taste. Of his poetry and literary criticism very little is sure of permanence. He was a Tennysonian—an "ethical Tennysonian"—and just now that means hardly anything to a generation which has gone from barbaric yawping to realism. One thinks that interest in his nature essays is likely to continue, so much in common have they with the spirit and intent of Walton. What is certain to be remembered enviously for a long time is the man himself. He possessed a now lost graciousness—the knack of saying and doing with style and what used to be termed breeding. Even youngsters who sniff at the art and thinking of the immediate past are admittedly awed by personalities which achieved self-government.

A Gentleman of the Old School

A WARM love of country and of Church must follow a reading of the annual directory number of *Hospital Progress,* official journal of the Catholic Hospital Association: of country because it is our fellow countrymen throughout the length and breadth of the land, and our neighbors in Canada, who are revealed to be so tenderly, and so practically, solicitous for their sick; and of Church because they do this in the disciplined ranks of the Faith as part of their mission in the diffusion of the mercies and love of God. The directory says editorially that in spite of the times, "the situation in the Catholic hospital field not only gives no evidence of deterioration proportionate to the downward progress of commercial and financial enterprises but on the other hand has given unmistakable signs of progress." Catholic hospitals in the United States and Canada are shown to be responsible for practically two million patients and for nineteen million hospital days during the last year. In addition, out-patient clinical departments have cared for approximately six hundred thousand patients, with two and one half million treatments. On the basis of operating cost, this represents an eighty million dollar service to the community, of which it is estimated that between one-quarter and one-third was given free of charge. To this figure should be added the inestimable contribution of the eleven thousand Sisters who give their lives to the care of the sick.

Catholic Hospitals

DURING the past year, not a single Catholic hospital in the United States and only four in Canada have found it necessary to close their doors. It should be said that in the case of the Canadians, they were in sparsely populated and far from affluent regions. In the United States, including insular possessions, there are 661 Catholic hospitals, and in Canada, 157. Of the first, 418, and of the second, 51, have received the unconditioned approval of the American College of Surgeons. Of the Sisters serving in our hospitals, 53 percent of those in the United States are registered

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nurses, and approximately 15 percent are pursuing courses toward a higher degree. In Canada, the ratios are approximately 50 and 10 percent. Besides the hospital facilities reported, there are some 165 agencies in the United States and 63 in Canada which care for the sick in diverse manners, either by providing visiting nurse services or nursing homes, and there are many border-line cases of orphanages and retreats for the aged where the care of invalids is not reported. There are also certain non-sectarian and governmental hospitals where Sisters are in charge or do the nursing —we have in mind a leprosarium of which this is true —that do not for various reasons wish to be represented in Catholic statistics. All of this work is of such a shining quality that we can add only a humble note of appreciation. In this appreciation should be included, of course, the doctors and internes who give so generously of their time to the poor, and those lay people who contribute their generous support.

The Busy Cricket

WE ARE indebted to our contemporary, *Time,* for an item which seems to be of first-class human interest and not unconnected with economics, art and the will to live. This reported the founding of an Academy of Art in New York where useful or what might be called utilitarian services are accepted as payments for lessons in what the grossly material would call the inutilitarian occupations, such as dancing, singing, violin and piano playing, sculping and painting. The bartering takes this form, that a pupil in a painting class will herself serve as a model some of the time, or do some cleaning around the place—it started out as a large empty loft with a couple of mirrors in it, a model's dais in one corner and a piano—or play the piano for a dancing class or type some letters. A Polish cook who has ambitions to make a famous coryphée of her daughter, cooks for the faculty. The latter is headed by a twenty-three-year-old blonde who is described by *Time* as having "a passion for self-improvement." It would seem to us from the evidence that she has had an excellent metabolism, or a gift or talent of just plain energy, where others are perhaps endowed with an amiable placidness.

CONSIDER: at fifteen she had a job dancing in two Paris night clubs and giving imitations of Mistinguette, Spinelli and Yvonne Printemps; at sixteen she was *première danseuse* of the Lyons opera and at the end of the season her carriage was dragged through the streets by long lines of students cheering and shouting "Vive la Poupée!" The following summer she spent with her grandmother, a Baroness, in her castle in Austria. Then she came to these shores where she has been a Ziegfield ballerina, won a Metropolitan art school competition, spent two years in Hollywood, opened her own ballet school, and now has her barter academy of the arts. On the basis of the slender information that we have, the least that could be said for all this is that it certainly is not stuffy. Conceivably it could be first-class enterprise in the right direction. In a country which, due to overproduction, is operating its steel mills at less than 20 percent of capacity and that is growing staples to burn, with the resultant nemesis of technological unemployment, there is room for speculation on the possibilities of employment in inutilitarian occupations. As surely as there are excellent citizens who would sooner dance a jig than hoe a row of beans, there are many more estimable citizens who would sooner hoe the row than dance. The fable of the ant and the cricket may be overstressed. Because of the tragedies of our present situation, there can be an overemphasis on reconstruction through utilitarian reëmployment which will be followed by the same nemesis as the present. The golden ages of civilizations of the past have been typified by extensive patronage of art. There can be direct help to the man with the hoe in such patronage as well as the indirect amelioration of the general gaiety of the nation.

MUST AMERICA PANHANDLE?

WE HAVE no respect for easy ways out. They have all been tried and found wanting. But is there a hard way that really leads somewhere? The terrain upon which economic institutions have landed is not unexplored. We know that it is a desert, parched to a crisp, in which wants have dried up and prices with them. The primary result is a vast population unable to earn anything. And this has the effect of scaring everyone else into economy, lest the money spent for goods should be needed because its possessor joins those who cannot earn. Is the desert thus described our permanent habitat, or may we hope to come into some promised land?

Until March last, government efforts to cope with the disaster were virtually limited to currency management. It was felt that if money of sufficient quantity and quality could be placed at the disposal of industry, its use would automatically lead to a revival of productive and commercial activity. The Hoover government strained every nerve to ease credit, to place funds at the disposal of industries unable to carry through refinancing operations in the normal ways and to keep filled a huge reservoir of liquid financial power. This policy was by no means as stupid as many people think. Normally the lever of credit can be used to lift activity from the abyss of a depression. But the administration was so devoid of political force and so beset with the rottenness which had seeped into all parts of the economic structure during a decade or more of speculative prosperity that its efforts failed and brought us still farther into the desert described above.

It now appears that there is no way out—that normal economic processes will fail to make the cycle depression become the cycle prosperity, and that therefore we must set about making the desert habitable. In

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other words: the Roosevelt government has gone to work diggings wells, as it were, and creating business oases. It hopes to reëstablish the farm industry. Thousands of men have been sent off to work in forests. Beer, flowing like a tide throughout the nation, has brought employment and cheer to many. And it is hoped that a restoration of confidence in the future will bring a measure of additional improvement, profitable to railroads and other corporations thus enabled to expand payrolls. But if all this has the virtues of modesty and prudent struggle for the benefit of everybody, the fact remains that the desert may not blossom like the rose in this way.

Enter Mr. Thomas Ewing Dabney, a New Orleans financial writer, with a book called "Revolution or Jobs" (New York: The Dial Press). This is written in the knock-'em-down, brother-that's-my-elbow style which some newspaper men still believe will "put an idea across." We wish Mr. Dabney had restrained himself, and put more facts and less propaganda behind his statements. In essence what he has to say is plain truth of such importance that it should be given the right of way in all economic discussion from now on. Here is the gist of the matter: the jobless man is the central figure in this time of crisis; he is neither pleasant to contemplate nor good to imitate; fearing to resemble him, the worker hoards his money; and the final result is more business stagnation and more jobless men. This is the way Mr. Dabney summarizes it: "If 23 percent of the working population is out of a job, and 22 percent of the union men and a still heavier percentage of non-union men are on part time and reduced wages, it is conservative to say that more than half our population of 124,833,000 is asking, 'When do we eat?' or at least, 'How little is it necessary to eat in order to keep alive?' Everybody who is not in the bread line today is afraid he is going to be there tomorrow. Workers and employers are running a panic-race to see who can cut down purchasing power more." Of course Mr. Dabney has made too much of a point of eating, which still occurs fairly regularly in this very rural country. But the point is obvious and rightly taken.

Suppose that there are 40,000,000 families of three in the United States. If every one of them saves $50.00 a year, which would ordinarily have been spent for necessities, because of fear, the total withdrawn from the market is $2,000,000,000. Should this amount be spent for goods because it became safe to do so, there would be a minor boom. But if it is taken from the banks and hoarded—and savings banks know how many small sums were recently and still are withdrawn from circulation—the consequences are as bad as the effects of spending would have been good. Even more impressive is this fact: suppose that 10,000,000 families are without income other than what is afforded them by way of relief. In a sense they are still employed—that is, through taxation, gifts and other forms of money raising, those who still possess wealth pay something to those who have nothing. The real meaning of the "dole" is, therefore, that the wage scale of our 10,000,000 families is curtailed to the bone. When an employed citizen hoards money because he is afraid of losing his job, what he is really doing is this: he is saving in order to supplement the "relief wage" he will get if he is without employment. And when a stagnant industry hoards cash, it too is seeking a means to pay bills in case income is shut off.

The only straight line through this puzzle is fairly clear. First, society must somehow insure citizens against unemployment. The state must declare that nobody is going to be let out of work henceforth. Second, society must put back to work those who are jobless. If these two things are done, the desert will prove fertile. But how can they be accomplished? Mr. Dabney offers as a complete solution the plan advanced by Mr. Sigmund Odenheimer, a Southern mill operator. This plan is the most comprehensive, as well as perhaps the most simple, ever devised to meet so complex a situation as that we have described. Mr. Odenheimer begins by suggesting a constitutional amendment to regulate hours of labor. That adopted, an "Hours of Labor Commission" is created. From now on we quote Mr. Dabney: "The law would make it mandatory that one week after the Commission was appointed, it would issue a proclamation that the hours of labor in all industries, work shops, stores, etc., employing a minimum number of persons—say five—should not exceed a certain total a week. The work-week would be just long enough to give jobs to everyone. The estimate is that we need a twenty-hour week now. Industry and business could operate as many hours a week as they wished; they would only have to put on more shifts. . . . The Hours of Labor Commission would make the work-week long or short, as economic conditions changed. No matter how much or how little production—that is, work—there was, everyone who wanted a job would have one."

There is the idea, so simple that nothing further need be said about it. Mr. Odenheimer believes that the plan would eliminate fear, and with it the chief obstacle to financial recovery. We here agree that this fear must be removed. But Mr. Odenheimer's plan is another matter. To what does it lead? If the government undertakes to control the work-week in the manner described above, will it not also be forced to regulate wage scales? And if it regulates wage-scales, what room is allotted to initiative? We wonder whether the United States, a civilization based upon nomadic effort, could survive the strain imposed by such industrial engineering feats as Mr. Odenheimer proposes. His idea is, in essence, far more drastic than anything done in Italy or Germany to regulate earnings. Does the American workman's tradition, or do the habits of life upon which the middle class has been based, permit of the almost unparalleled control demanded? These are stirring and important questions, raised by a book which has a genuine message.

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MESSAGE FROM ROME

By MICHAEL WILLIAMS

EASTER SUNDAY, with all the bells of St. Peter's booming, chiming and clashing, and with two hundred thousand Holy Year pilgrims cheering themselves hoarse as Pope Pius XI blessed the Eternal City and the world at large from the exterior central balcony of the Basilica of the First Apostle, brought Lent to an end at high noon today in a flood of sunshine under a canopy of bland and stainless blue.

The nineteen-hundredth anniversary of the death of Jesus Christ commemorated before a million empty tabernacles in Christendom on Good Friday had been succeeded by the ineffably glorious celebration of Christ's Resurrection. So came to its first great climax the Holy Year of penance, reparation and sacrifice decreed by the Vicar of Christ as a means of opening the springs of grace, thus implementing the Church's promise of redemption to men, and thus lifting them out of the depths of the depression and out from under the shadow of war and of the plagues of hunger and despair now darkening so many nations, into the light of a new day of peace and Christian fraternity. The Pope had told his non-Catholic children, as well as the sheep of his visible flock, that the way out of the worst at least of their economic and political and racial and religious problems and strifes would be opened to all in this Holy Year, provided that in attempting to solve these problems men should remember that they must guide their statescraft and treaties and economic systems by the immutable laws established by Almighty God and brought to the earth by God's Son, when He lived and worked as a man among men, and that they also must remember that justice and love must be the twin corner-stones of all their temples and marts and forums and courts and parliaments.

For the members of The Calvert Associates party of pilgrims, the first from America, the day was particularly happy. It is no straining of language to say that they realized fully the Holy Father's promise of peace and happiness to the pilgrims who had obeyed his behest, in many instances at considerable self-sacrifice of means and time, to travel across the seas to the shrines of the City of the Vicar of Christ. Only four days ago they had been received in a specially favored manner by Pius XI, and the memories of that extraordinary scene in which the Holy Father had greeted each one of the more than fifty members of the party, and for fifteen minutes had addressed them, and through them, their families and friends in the United States, blessing them, and specially blessing the non-Catholic friends of THE COMMONWEAL, were still fresh in their hearts. And to remind them, though indeed never will any of them forget, the *Osservatore Romano,* the Vatican City daily newspaper, certainly one of the most important journals in the world, for it is at least the semi-official and decidedly the specially informed and representative organ of the Holy See, had today carried what Americans know as a first-page story of their unique reception by the Pope. In substance, though greatly condensed, it ran as follows:

"The Holy Father was happy to welcome the American delegation to Rome, and especially because they had made such sacrifices to come from a great distance. They were the first of the American pilgrims to come during the Holy Year, and he hoped that they were only the forerunners of many others from the United States. He gave this pilgrimage his special blessing, because it came to him under the auspices of THE COMMONWEAL and of The Calvert Associates. He knew something of the history of this paper and this association, its merits, and all its works in the field of education, literary and historical culture, and of interpretation and diffusion of papal encyclicals, and particularly of those of 'Quadragesimo Anno' and 'Casti Connubii.' He knew also of its efforts in behalf of a meritorious League for Social Justice, and of all of its efforts to make known throughout America the *beau geste* of Lord Calvert of Maryland. The Holy Father displayed his knowledge of the origins of The Calvert Associates, saying that he knew it to be named for the great founders of the first Catholic colony of the United States, George and Cecil Calvert. The Holy Father expressed his gratification with the letter which the President of The Calvert Associates had addressed to him, and extended his blessing to all those who signed it. He charged Mr. Williams to say to all that the Pope imparted his blessing to the workers in this field of social justice. Not all, it is true, belonged to the Catholic fold, but he blessed all with equal affection, because all who do good were dear to his heart, and also because he hoped that one day the Divine Master would make of the whole world one fold with one Shepherd."

The letter from The Calvert Associates and their friends and coöperating organizations, both Catholic and non-Catholic, which elicited so remarkable a response from the Pontiff, was substantially the same as the draft published in THE COMMONWEAL a few weeks ago, with the addition of a description of THE COMMONWEAL's policy and of the Catholic League of Social Justice, in which the Holy Father displayed a keen and appreciative interest. It was signed by His Eminence Cardinal Hayes and Archbishop Curley of Baltimore, under whose spiritual authority the three-hundredth anniversary of the founding of Maryland will be celebrated next year, and also by several score of the chief ecclesiastical and lay leaders of Catholic Action in the United States.

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ADDRESS TO AMERICANS

By EDOUARD HERRIOT

Great interest attaches to the visit of M. Herriot to the United States, as the official representative of his country at conversations initiated by President Roosevelt. We are fortunate in having secured permission to publish a translation of an appeal to Americans written by M. Herriot some weeks ago. Here the French statesman endeavors to explain clearly why it proved impossible to win the consent of the Chamber of Deputies for the debt payment due December last. His views are of decided value and importance at a time when the outlook for international action is not good.—The Editors.

WHY ATTEMPT to hide it? There now exists between France and the United States a grave misunderstanding. The situation should not be allowed to grow worse because of our silence. More than ever, these days when public opinion dominates governmental policies, truth must be sought however unpleasant. If I have acquired the right to speak on the problem of the international debts by sacrificing without hesitation my ministry to the orders of my conscience, I beg leave to explain to the American as well as to the French people what I consider the misunderstanding to be.

First of all, how could this misunderstanding arise? It came about because of the too brief interval between the start of our negotiations and December 15, the date on which payment was due.

Because of the American elections, the French government could not approach the Washington government before November 11. Only then could we ask for a reëxamination of the debt question and for a prolongation of the moratorium. The government of the United States refused this moratorium on November 23.

We were then under the obligation of asking for reconsideration, aware that we were doing so under a heavy handicap, because, in the course of the last year, there had developed in the United States, especially on the subject of gold, an anti-French propaganda which I declare on my soul and conscience to have been entirely unjust, not to say insulting. The French government addressed a second note to the American government on December 1. This note was much more detailed than the first. It called attention to the growing gravity of the economic and financial crisis which seemed to demand a new study of the intergovernmental debts on the part of all the peoples concerned. It also recalled the liberal policies initiated by Europe at Lausanne. It invited the United States to follow this salutary example. It recognized formally the juridical validity of our engagements. But it pointed out that the Hoover moratorium of 1931 had constituted, as it were, a moral substitution of one debt for another, since, at the suggestion of the President of the United States, Germany, our principal debtor, had obtained a three-year moratorium and a reduction of *nine-tenths* of her debt.

On December 6, President Hoover made known to the American Congress that he did not approve the suspension of the December 15 payments. On December 8, the Secretary of State answered our second note. He declared his readiness to cooperate with us to examine the whole situation, but he persisted in his refusal to suspend the payment due.

To note the dates in question is of the greatest importance. They mean that the French government, the French Parliament, the French people, had less than a week at their disposal to examine the situation created by this breakdown of the negotiations. The debate, which I postponed as long as possible, opened in the Chamber of Deputies on Monday, December 12. Scarcely four days had elapsed since the forwarding of the second American memorandum. Even while the discussion went on in the French Chamber, further communications were reaching us. The government over which I presided believes that it coolly faced and fulfilled its obligations. But it should be easy to understand that it was submerged by a tidal wave of public opinion which broke upon Parliament. The French people, on the whole, could not make out why they should be refused the very thing which had been solicited from them in favor of their own debtor, Germany.

Such, I believe, is the *psychological* explanation of the tragic misunderstanding which has arisen between us.

Let us now examine how the whole situation presents itself *logically*. To my French fellow citizens I said and I still say: "Legally, the payment of December 15 is due." This fact I expressed, in my memorandum of December 1, as follows: "The French government desires particularly to state that it has never thought of contesting the juridical validity of the various liabilities at the basis of the war debts." I fully recognize that the proposition of President Hoover, the possible dangers of which I pointed out at the proper time, made the most specific reservations on the subject of reparations and debts. I further recognize that the celebrated Washington *communiqué,* from which Germany so abundantly profited, included no formal engagement on the part of the United States. We should have been less trusting. I said at the tribune of the Chamber of Deputies—and I do not regret having said it—that we should make the December payment. The Chamber, moreover, did not deny that we should pay. Its decision to postpone the payment was based on the answer made to England on December 11 by the American government.

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This brings us back to the regrettable influence exercised upon the debate in the French Chamber by the shortness of the time available for discussion between the American and the French governments from November 11 to December 15. So much so, that there was perhaps, because of this, a further misunderstanding which weighed heavily on our decision. It was not clearly known in Paris how the British reservations had been received at Washington. Be this as it may, I express a personal opinion—today, merely as a member of the French Chamber of Deputies—that we should now pay with the identical stipulations made in the British payment. For I attach the greatest importance to this convergence of action. Far from being the inimical gesture of a concerted stand against the United States, it is but a means of showing that European nations, France, England, Italy, remain united, as they were at Lausanne, in their desire to work for a world reorganization to insure peace.

This being said, the same concern for facts and loyal understanding obliges me to explain to the citizens of the United States how France looks at the present situation and why. We are told: "There is no connection between reparations and debts; they are two entirely different questions." Very well. But, for us, there has been but one war. Our land was the scene of the bloody struggle. For four years we suffered the martyrdom of invasion. In 1919, a large section of France was left devastated, dotted everywhere with burial-grounds where rest, we do not forget, beside their British and French comrades, many American heroes. How difficult it was for us to obtain a satisfactory settlement for the restoration of that vast area which had been their common battle-field!

In 1924, in London—I was present—after negotiations in which Mr. Kellogg played an admirable part, we finally obtained the Dawes plan. For several years this plan functioned admirably, thanks to the enlightened vigilance of Mr. Gilbert Parker. A day came when we were told: "You must now trust Germany, free her from all control, believe that she will keep the engagements which she will make of her own accord."

We allowed ourselves to be persuaded. We collaborated with our American friends to draw up the Young plan which called for great sacrifices on our part but which, at least, synchronized the payments Germany was to make to us for reparations and the payments on our own debt to the United States. We hoped that we had reached at last a stable solution of the problem.

Then, suddenly, came the Hoover moratorium. It is true that it made juridical reservations, but it is no less true that it destroyed, at one stroke, the mechanism of settlement which had been so painfully elaborated. This was followed by the Washington *communiqué*. Germany asked for new reductions. Experts were consulted, among them an American, Mr. Walter Stewart. Out of the deliberations of these technicians held at Basel issued what was evidently the summing up of the new resulting situation: "A general adjustment of intergovernmental debts (reparations and others) to the present troubled situation of the world—an adjustment which should take place at once to avoid new disasters—is the only measure capable of reëstablishing that confidence which is the necessary condition of economic stability and lasting peace."

Here then was the old problem restated in terms of the present. Here was the ground on which to meet if we were to follow the counsel of reason and wisdom. Europe hearkened to the solemn call of the Basel experts. It drafted the accords of Lausanne.

I respectfully ask the President of the United States and the American Congress to reflect on the importance and the bearings of this effort.

The provisional accords of Lausanne, as Senator Borah has said, are the key to the future. Either the work begun at Lausanne will be completed and we shall be on the road to permanent peace; or that work will be repudiated, and we shall drift into chaos.

Will the people of the United States believe a Frenchman, who, again only recently, fought to obtain financial help for that Austria which gave the first signal of the World War? Why should not all lovers of peace in your great republic second our efforts? The letter kills, the spirit vivifies. We French know that you in turn are now suffering. But this suffering only shows the more clearly that you yourselves need the Europe, restored to economic sanity and consecrated to the maintenance of peace, which we are trying to establish.

I have expressed fearlessly and frankly my opinion. Will my voice be heard? If my thesis seemed to you just, we could seek the means to act accordingly. It is impossible for any reasonable man to accept that the problem of the war debts is to weigh down the world for more than sixty years. Transfers of money without corresponding transfers of goods I have often compared to ocean sailings without return cargoes. Such an arrangement is essentially and permanently destructive. What we need are constructive solutions.

In expressing these opinions, I am gratefully mindful of the part which America played in the World War. No discussion about money can make me forget the sacrificial fraternity of the battle-fields. I recall a visit I made, ten years ago, to Harvard University and my long meditation in the vestibule of its magnificent Widener Library given by a mother in memory of her son, the victim of a tragic disaster. I recall the sacred list in that vestibule, Harvard's Honor Roll of the Great War. I still see, above the staircase, the fresco of Sargent symbolizing the ardor with which American youth threw itself into the struggle. It would be criminal, it would be insane, to let such memories grow dim.

I evoked them anew a few days ago in Paris, before an immense audience, and the emotion aroused was profoundly touching.

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Nor have I forgotten that precious inscription which I read in Boston, near the City Hall, in the old cemetery, before King's Chapel. It is dedicated to the memory of the Chevalier de Saint-Sauveur, *aide-major* in the French squadron, who died in 1778, after risking his life for the American cause. The wording of that inscription was chosen by the Comte d'Estaing, commander of the first fleet sent by France to America. How we should treasure it! It reads: "May all attempts to separate France and America be forever unfruitful."

What we pray for today is that France and the United States come to an understanding to complete the work begun at Lausanne, the work of international union which Walt Whitman anticipated and sung so magnificently:

> Reconciliation, word over all, beautiful as the sky,
> It is beautiful that war and all its deeds of carnage must in time be utterly lost.

It is for this idea that I sacrificed my ministry.

THE HOME AND CRIME

By JOHN P. McCAFFREY

WHAT is a home? A home may be defined as the place where a family lives. The home has been romantically defined as the nest of the human race. A home is the place where a father and mother live their lives, rearing and caring for their children. We know that today many married people deliberately exclude children from their lives. They miss the real meaning of home. A home is a nest, and a nest demands the young.

Furthermore, the home is located in a particular spot. The home is the immediate environment of the child, and the neighborhood is the immediate environment of the home.

The home has been classified sociologically as: (1) In destitution: where there is present starvation, lack of clothes, lack of warm shelter. When these three primal necessities are lacking, either totally or partially, we have a destitute home. (2) In poverty: when these necessities are had but barely, had in the face of constant struggle and with nothing left for outside uses. (3) Normal. A normal home is one where the three necessities of life are had with a little extra for simple recreations or pleasures. (4) Comfortable. The comfortable home is one in which the necessities are easily had as well as provision for ordinary comforts and recreations. (5) Luxurious. The luxurious home is that where the family has unusual opportunity for recreations and culture. No stop of any kind is felt to hinder its activities.

Now, looking at these homes from the point of view of the economic position, we find that the greater percentage of delinquents come from the homes classed as normal and comfortable, simply because there are more of these homes than of the other class. These homes also claim a higher average of success in reclaiming offenders and a higher percentage of failure to reclaim them, simply because there are more such homes in the country and the chances in each case are more numerous, either to succeed or to fail in reclaiming the boys who go back to them.

Dr. William Healy and Miss Augusta F. Bronner in their excellent study, "Delinquents and Criminals," studied the economic lives of Chicago criminals and found these ratios in 675 cases: destitute homes, 5 percent; homes in poverty, 22 percent; normal homes, 35 percent; comfortable homes, 34 percent; luxurious homes, 4 percent.

Fewer offenders came from homes in destitution and poverty than from the normal and comfortable homes for the reason that there are fewer such homes and this reduces their incidence of delinquency. But, the chances of these homes failing to reclaim the boys who came from them is greater than for instance the luxurious homes.

In other words, the fact that I want to make clear is that the economic character of the home is not the supreme factor either in the making of offenders or in the reformation of them. It is something else.

The second way of looking at the home is not so much from its sociological makeup as from its physical organization, although physical is hardly the correct word.

I pass on to the question of the broken home.

These figures are from Healy and Bronner. Their studies of 2,000 cases in Chicago and 2,000 cases in Boston showed that normal (unbroken) homes were found in a little over half of the cases. The rest of the homes were broken. One parent was dead in 27 percent of the 4,000 cases; both parents were dead in 4 percent of the cases; in 15 percent of the cases studied the parents were either living apart or divorced or had deserted; 2 percent of the cases were illegitimate children; and in 17 percent of the cases the mother was working out of the home. In almost half the cases studied we had a broken home.

Now, it is certainly not true that 50 percent of the homes in America are broken. We have no general statistics, but we can reasonably say that the figures are not anywhere near the percentage found. In "Five Hundred Criminal Careers," Sheldon Glueck and Eleanor Glueck studied a group in Massachusetts and found that in 306 out of 510 cases there was a broken home; a failing of 60 percent. In 214, or 71 percent

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of these 306 cases, the break came when the offender was fourteen years of age or younger; and in 87, or 29 percent of the cases, the offenders were adolescent. Death was the big factor in splitting the homes, causing 183 broken homes or 60 percent of the total cases. Separation, divorce and desertion were found in 77 or 25 percent of the cases. So much for the results of the Glueck studies. We can say that 60 percent of the cases studied came from broken homes, and we know that the homes of the country are not physically broken to that extent.

The last group of facts that I want to present here are those that were gathered by the Catholic Charities Probation Bureau in the Court of General Sessions from January 1, 1925, to November 1, 1926. According to Cooley:

> The cases totaled 3,053 and out of these 1,440 or 47.1 percent were broken homes. The removal of the missing parent, generally the father, was due to death, separation, divorce, desertion, hospital or institutional confinement (occasionally imprisonment), and it was upon the mother therefore that the care of the children developed in nearly all the cases. Forced to assume the rôle of bread-winner, the duties as house-maker were necessarily neglected and her absence from the house made it impossible for her to train her children and direct their activities. Because such a large proportion of offenders proved to be products of broken homes, it is reasonable to conclude that this condition constituted an important contributing factor in their delinquent careers.

It is certain that 47 percent of the homes in the New York area are not broken homes. We have seen the figures for Chicago, Boston and New York. In summing up, we can say that practically 50 percent of the homes of the offenders studied were broken homes, and 50 percent of the cases studied came from homes that were not broken. But there are more normal homes than broken homes. So we must conclude that broken homes are contributing strongly to send our boys into prison.

The real incidence of the homes in making delinquents is not from its economic status or from its physical makeup but absolutely from its moral tone. According to moral tone, I would class the home as: (1) A good home in which the moral tone, parental control and parental supervision are good. (2) A bad home where the moral tone, parental control and parental supervision are lacking. (3) An indifferent home where the moral tone is neither positively good nor positively bad, but where the deterring factors that would keep the children from conflict with the law are absent.

The moral tone of the home depends on: (1) The presence of religious teaching in the lives of the parents and children. (2) Healthy discipline to keep the children away from the evil factors in the environment of the home. (3) Parental authority and control, when the children respect and obey their parents so that parental guidance is possible. (4) Parental supervision of the companions of the children and of their recreations.

Upon these factors depends the moral tone of the home. Upon the moral tone of the home depends the moral tone of the neighborhood, and upon the moral tone of the neighborhood depends the moral tone of the community. I am convinced that a good home that has this moral tone can overcome all the unfavorable factors in a bad neighborhood. The gang on the streets, the pool room, the dance hall and the moving pictures are defeated by the atmosphere of such a home. Sometimes with all these factors present, we find delinquency in the home. But when this is so, it is always the exception.

The place where the broken homes fails is in the lack of parental control and parental supervision. Healy and Bronner found that 40 percent of their 4,000 cases studied in Chicago and Boston came from homes where there was this great lack of discipline.

> Extreme parental neglect implies neglect, principally moral (but also sometimes physical), as the result of extreme ignorance or moral turpitude or overt bad example on the part of parents.

In their studies they found that some of the bad influences in the home are: (1) Excessive quarreling. In 12 percent of the 4,000 cases there was excessive quarreling in the home. (2) Alcoholism. Immorality or criminality were found in 21 percent of the 4,000 cases studied.

They studied the further illuminating question: How many offenders came from good homes? One thousand cases were taken from the Chicago group and the Boston group. Eliminating the bad factors mentioned, they found that the figures for Boston were 10.3 percent; for Chicago 5 percent. For 2,000 cases, only 7.6 percent of the offenders were living in and came from good homes.

Of course, there are more good homes than bad homes in this country and percentage of incidence in respect to the character of the home would give us an expectation of even more delinquents from good homes. But such is the glory of the good home, the moral home, the home built on the solid foundation of religion. It is the salvation of the country; it is the solution of the crime problem. The sign-posts out of the ruins are a school where religious training is given; a church attendance that is active and a church interest that is sustained; and last of all a good home. These three factors can lessen delinquency. They can salvage human beings from the scrap heap of prison and, most important, they can save souls for the Kingdom of Heaven.

A good home is like the battlements of a great citadel reaching up from the sand and dirt to the very skies, flying the banners of salvation to men and nations.

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THE LONG ROAD HOME: II[1]

THE TEMPTERS

By JOHN MOODY

"THIS corporation is ready to pay you any sum within reason that you may name, if you will fix that report so we can use it to our advantage in the suit."

It was the late spring of 1908. I was sitting in the conference room of one of the largest industrial corporations in the United States, surrounded by a dozen lawyers, several accountants and clerks, besides three or four of the company's officials. The conference had lasted several hours. The long table in the center of the room was piled with legal documents, reports and statistical exhibits.

The occasion was this. The corporation had run up against the anti-trust law and was fighting for its very life; or for its rights, as it contended. It was charged with being a monopoly, of having been guilty of illegal price-fixing and of having gouged from the public many millions of exorbitant profits, which it was now being ordered to disgorge.

Some of the best legal talent in America had been retained to fight this suit, and much defensive evidence was being accumulated. In building up the defense, it was thought well to make an investigation of the true profits of other business concerns which had not been sued, but which, it was held, had been even more guilty of gouging the public. This had been done, and I had been called in as an independent expert to certify to the correctness of the figures. The certification of an outsider would of course carry more weight with the court than any unsupported statements presented by the defendant itself.

Now, I had carefully analyzed these exhibits and had discovered that they had been manipulated and "doctored"; they did not present the truth at all, but were twisted to make a strong case for the defendant. I therefore declined to certify to their correctness. And this long-drawn-out conference was wholly engaged in trying to convince me that black was white, and that it would be worth my while to so certify.

"You can prove anything by figures," the legal spokesman had said. "It all depends on the way you set them up. If we simply submit these exhibits to the court without independent endorsement, then they will start their own experts investigating. If you, however, as an independent authority, certify to their correctness, then they will be accepted without question. And we will make it worth your while to do this."

It was a temptation. I still was nearly a hundred thousand dollars in debt, was being harassed daily by my creditors, and desperately working night and day trying to rebuild my business without adequate capital. These people had many millions at stake; in fact, their whole institution was in jeopardy. I could easily hold them up for some substantial sum like fifty or a hundred thousand—and all my financial troubles would be over. It looked alluring; and I admit I played with the idea all that afternoon.

But no, it would not do. I was struggling to preserve my honor and integrity in the business world and make reparation for the blunders and stupidities of the past; how now could I afford to go into the game of graft? Once started, there would be no stopping; I would continue to follow this downward path. I might grow quickly rich, as there would be a myriad of such opportunities ahead, I well knew. But I also knew that I would have to continue to live with myself. And I turned it down.

I cite this little incident without any motive of self-laudation. I might easily have fallen into this pit had I been a solvent and successful business man at that time. Such practices were common enough, as they still are, in the financial and business world. The ethics of big business are not always what they are cracked up to be. In saying this I do not imply that big business men as a class are more consciously dishonest than the general run of men; they simply accept the customs of the times. It has become just as commonplace, in this feverish age of material progress and mass production, for the less scrupulous to buy their way to security and success, as it is for the dishonest politician to buy his way to political power. And as "nothing succeeds like success," the intentionally honest are prone to believe that whatever methods seem "customary," are correct if they succeed. And such men are frequently atonished when you suggest that a certain course of action may be unethical or immoral. They of course assume that everybody is doing it. For it is very widely believed and taught, in our day and generation, that economic and business problems have nothing to do with moral problems.

As I was climbing up the rungs of my new business ladder during those years immediately preceding the war, and in my maturity getting further away from the foibles and follies of earlier years, there is little doubt that I was growing harder and more materialistic in my outlook on life. Preoccupied wholly with business struggle, I gave little thought to idealisms of any sort. This was a hard, competitive workaday world, and the philosophy of every man for himself, and the devil take us all, seemed the only rule of reason. Obviously, human life was little beyond a struggle to survive; there was no God; no heaven above; these were but

[1] The first of these articles appeared last week.

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poetic fancies. The only thing to live for then, was to make the best of these few short years in seeking creature comforts and security, and make haste to do it, for one's sun would shortly set. First achieve financial success in order to provide properly for one's family and loved ones; and then, if one's mood so ordered, gratify one's tastes, ambitions and emotions, noble or ignoble, as one saw fit. Such was the sum and substance of my philosophy.

A painfully materialistic, painfully cynical outlook on life, is it not? And yet in those days it did not seem so sordid. It certainly appeared to be the view of life of most people among whom I was thrown—especially in business circles. The old notion of allowing your life to be influenced unduly by the "verities"—the moral law—was dying out. For were not most of our deep thinkers teaching us that what we used to call sin was merely error, foolishness? Right then, William James was telling us in his "Pragmatism," that "truth" is nothing but the expedient in our way of thinking, and "the right" is only the expedient in our way of behaving. Truth is made, he told us, just as health, wealth and strength are made, in the course of human experience.

Although this sort of philosophy dominated my outlook, like most men I always had my eye out for something better. It is in the nature of us all, even when we have argued ourselves into atheism, to still yearn for the preternatural. We want something to take the place of the God we have annihilated in our consciousness. However much bravado we may show, we are not satisfied, in our deeper moments, with the notion that our only destiny is the grave; it is too irrational. And so men browse around looking for some new conception of religion—and frequently what they grasp at is some pantheistic notion.

Now, I was no exception to the rule. In much earlier years, after Christianity had faded out with me, I had searched the theosophical stars in quest for life's higher meaning. There was a time when, in my twenties, I had followed the Blavatsky route to my undoing; and then had been carried to the heights by Buddha's Eight Fold Path. I had also, once upon a time, dipped into the fog of Christian Science, but fortunately Mark Twain had here come to the rescue before it was too late. And now, in these drear agnostic days, the urge for some belief in the preternatural again obsessed me. This time it was the so-called Vedanta "philosophy."

But after all, this proved, as had all the others, to be only poetry; dreaming; rhetoric. No pantheistic theory could possibly grip me for very long; they all left me cold when reasoned through to their logical end. Every one of them led to some sort of Nirvana, whether they called it that or not. And that is less than nothing. And they all start with the "world-soul" idea—which also, when analyzed, is nothing. If there is a God at all, He is the Creator, not the Cosmos; and if the Creator, He would have to be "personal"—He could not be "impersonal." This was always for me the final answer.

But did we need the idea of God, anyway? William James said "No," unless you "find it makes you feel good to believe in one." Anyhow, perhaps science would answer the whole riddle of life some day; it had already unraveled many mysteries. And so I went on my godless way, as most other practical modern men appeared to be doing. But I was far from satisfied.

Yes, those years before the great cataclysm burst upon the world were ghastly in their materialism. But most of us were optimists just the same. If there was no heaven above, at least a heaven on earth was in the making. We believed that the world was every day, in every way, getting better and better. We saw all around us increasing creature comforts, ever-growing educational facilities for the masses, advancing technique in the production and distribution of wealth. The march of progress was carrying us steadily toward the millennium; we were building for posterity.

The progress of democracy, too, seemed very real, notwithstanding the social unrest at home and the disturbed political aspects abroad. The British had swung their government toward a more definitely democratic path, and the Liberals and Laborites had clipped the wings of the House of Lords; Russia had established its Duma; and even in distant China a republic had been proclaimed; while in America, Woodrow Wilson, with his democratic gospel of the "new freedom," had just been swept into office.

Most of us Americans were saturated with the belief that all great wars were behind us. Modern, enlightened self-interest would forever prevent the breaking out of another great war; arbitration would invariably be resorted to in the adjustment of major disputes. Common sense dictated this. The Kaiser might be flashing his sword now and then, but that was for home consumption; the economic interests of Germany were all against war; and besides, social democracy was rapidly growing in Germany; and this meant disarmament, peace and international good-will.

Even though Continental Europe was an armed camp, and the Balkan contests were distinctly disturbing, a cheerful and hopeful optimism pervaded America during these pre-war years; and especially was this true in Wall Street and in general big-business circles. "Progress and prosperity" was the great motto of the big-business men who were making America.

Wall Street did not at first enthuse over Woodrow Wilson, though perhaps it preferred him to another four years of Theodore Roosevelt. Anyhow, financial opinion lined up fairly strongly behind him after he had sponsored the new Federal Reserve law. But Wilson's path was not strewn with roses; he inherited the Mexican imbroglio from the Taft administration, which soon became so serious that intervention seemed inevitable. However, with the opening of 1914 it looked as though the country was about to swing into a real business revival; and, as usual, Wall Street began to

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discount better times ahead by staging an upward movement in security prices. The Street was becoming bullish again, after two years of hesitancy and doubt.

Though prices commenced to crumble in May, and rumors were rife that Germany was selling enormous blocks of British and American securities in London and New York, the cheerful optimism still prevailed. And so little did I then glimpse danger ahead, that I planned a vacation trip to Europe for the coming summer. Nine years had elapsed since that first jaunt abroad, and now, in my growing prosperity, another, more extended trip—this time with our two growing boys—seemed very alluring. I had taken no extended holiday for all these years; it was time I did so.

My family went ahead of me. They sailed about the first of June to spend the time in France and Germany until the end of July, when I would meet them in London. We were to return home in September.

When the Serajevo murder occurred on June 28, my wife and boys were at Wiesbaden. But while rumors of impending war were growing stronger daily, I really harbored few misgivings; Austria and Serbia would surely patch up their quarrel; in a few weeks everything would be adjusted. Certainly, neither Germany nor Russia would allow themselves to be drawn into war over this purely local incident. This seemed the prevailing conservative view in Wall Street, and it was being reflected by our sanest newspapers. How crudely provincial we Americans were in those pre-war days!

I sailed on the steamer Baltic of the White Star Line on July 28. Opinion had become more unsettled after the Austrian ultimatum, but though things were getting a little panicky in the Street, long experience had taught me to discount the mercurial atmosphere of our financial center. And when, on the day of sailing, I learned that there had been a flood of last-minute passenger cancellations, I still was not disturbed.

The trip started quietly; there were few on board who seemed apprehensive; nearly all seemed to believe that the "wireless" would announce a complete rapprochement of the clever diplomats at any hour. We sane people would then have the laugh on those timid souls who had cancelled at the last minute through fear of the impossible happening.

Three days of serenity on a smooth sea, with optimism growing by the hour. And then, about nine o'clock in the evening of the third day out (July 30), all deck lights were suddenly extinguished, window curtains were drawn and every porthole was darkened.

The great World War was on!

CONCERNING GREGORIAN CHANT

By LUDWIG BONVIN

IN THE issue of January 11, 1933, of THE COMMONWEAL, the Reverend Ignatius Kelly wrote an interesting and candid "Apology for Plainsong," which concerns itself with the surprising fact of the almost universal opposition to Gregorian chant. He says:

> [If] the defender of the beauty of the Gregorian form of music . . . mentions the chant's appeal to people of taste and refinement, he will be suspected of belittling the aesthetic capacities of those who find little beauty in the chant, who are many more, he will be told, than those who are supposed to like it. . . . Why should this be? Why is it that the chant which the Church is said to approve above all other forms of music for its liturgical services, is not accepted readily by priests and people? . . . Why is it that the conscientious organist or choirmaster, who attempts to introduce the chant to his singers, meets generally with such opposition? . . . Let the choir attempt to use one or more of the Gregorian Masses and anonymous letters begin to trickle in to the pastor. The choir may be doing ever so well with the Gregorian and still it is opposed. . . .
>
> What, then, is the matter? Can it be that the Church, which ever fostered the lovely and the beautiful, proposes as fit for its service what is inherently repulsive? The prayers are beautiful, the vestments are splendid, the chalice is a work of art, etc., but the chant is the one disturbing element.

Why is this? Father Kelly proposes an answer which stresses the "intellectual appreciation of the beautiful" in opposition to the "sensible pleasure." It is not the purpose of these lines to examine this aesthetic concept, but to offer a practical solution to the puzzle concerning the general attitude toward Gregorian chant.

There are people who have either no conception, or quite an inadequate one, of the essential difference in character between church and secular music; others again who, if sincere, would acknowledge the fact that they don't want to do without the secular music even in the church. As Gregorian chant does differ essentially in character from secular music, it is no wonder that the churchgoers just described will have nothing to do with it. Their attitude therefore is no puzzle for us.

Among more enlightened persons, however, the following might be considered as factors making the appreciation of Gregorian chant difficult:

(1) The church tonalities or the ancient modes are one factor. Gregorian music is founded on scales that have become foreign to our present musical feeling. This fact, although disadvantageous, constitutes, to be sure, no insurmountable barrier against the appreciation of the chant. For the ear accustoms itself gradually to these tonalities, and discovers the beauties actually existing in this tonal system. Besides, one or another of these modes is very close to our modern tonalities; indeed, there are pieces in chant—for instance, the Missa de Angelis—which are scarcely distinguish-

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able tonally from compositions of today. With such selections of chant therefore the intelligent organist and choir director will make a start.

(2) Another point of great importance is the unisonal form of the Gregorian music, by reason of which the modern listener accustomed to harmony gets a sense of emptiness. Doubtless, harmony possesses great value and a high degree of impressiveness; it combines most naturally with melody, forming with it a new and more expressive whole. This sweet fruit we have now tasted a long while, and it has become almost indispensable to us. A musical diet that does not contain this element seems to us rather unpalatable.

It would therefore be unwise to give in to the historical and archaic claim of certain Gregorianists and to deprive the chant of organ accompaniment; for, after all, the instrumental medium, to some extent, makes up for the deficiency of polyphony and harmony in the chant.

(3) Harmful in effect too is the indiscriminate praise on the part of many, especially literary Gregorianists, for the entire repertory of Gregorian chant, as compositions ranking artistically highest, examples of church music unapproachable, almost like creations inspired from above.

Our mediaeval predecessors in composition were men just as we are; not all were geniuses, nor were they equally successful in all their musical productions. Moreover the chant repertory contains many an Asiatic heirloom, much that is exotic, that does not appeal to us Occidentals of the twentieth century, and which will never become popular among musicians nor among the people. Just recently a zealous but sincere Gregorianist told me that for years he has at the recurrence of the various ecclesiastical seasons taken up and sung to himself many a chant-piece which hitherto did not appeal to him, with the constant endeavor to get a liking for them, but that his efforts were ever unsuccessful. With a like endeavor and purpose I can and must say quite the same for myself.

When exaggerated praise here mentioned is made in the presence of a musician or church singer who is capable to judge, he loses confidence in Gregorianists and feels disgusted with the whole business.

Together with things of less worth, there is in chant much that is beautiful, in fact, very beautiful: pieces that, when given proper rhythm and rendition, are apt to gain the favor even of the inveterate adversaries of Gregorian chant.

Fortunately pieces of small worth can in most cases be omitted. As much as possible the judicious choirmaster will present his singers and the churchgoers, to whom he wishes to impart an appreciation for Gregorian chant, with only what is of real value.

(4) Another cause of the slight popularity of chant is to be sought in the indifferent, cold and stiff execution that is often allotted to it. The chant is frequently not thoroughly rehearsed, and sometimes not rehearsed at all.

(5) One of the most important causes for the regrettable attitude toward Gregorian chant, however, is certainly the rhythmic or, better, the arhythmic state, in which it is nearly always placed in the hands of the singers. How can one expect a truly sympathetic effect and the impression of natural beauty, expressiveness and artistic variety from a music whose notes are systematically, each one, equally short? To a small extent, of course, such a uniform gait can be both proper and satisfactory; but exclusively and continually used it becomes unnatural, soulless music that creates boredom, a music that stands in contradiction to every other kind of music and, in accordance with historical proof, one in contradiction also to the original form given to it by its composers, a form that appeared with different proportional note-values and constituted a melody which "must be carefully measured like a metrical text" (Hucbald, 840-930). How much must this melody, deprived of its original rhythm, have lost of its native beauty and expressiveness! Just imagine our modern music suddenly deprived of its rhythm, flowing along in notes all equally short! No wonder Gregorian chant doesn't please people more than it does and leaves them cold and bored. If we want to interest the great majority of men in the chant once more, we must rhythmize it again according to its original principles. Unfortunately there are in chant only a very few works of this kind for the music trade.

(6) As a final unfavorable factor, the organ accompaniment usually given the chant must be mentioned, an accompaniment stiff, without true euphony, whose chord changes, in the books of a certain school, accents the melody, from a rhythmical standpoint, throughout in a fashion quite absurd and unmusical. Besides, in many works the meager accompaniment devolves into complete insignificance, and becomes merely a disturbing accoustical feature. Father Soehner, O.S.B., in *Musica Sacra,* writes:

> Our chord sequence, moving pianissimo and primitively functionless, has the grievous defect that it fails of its every artistic plane. [And further:] The unprejudiced musician who has played two or three pages of one of the many accompaniment books, and takes in the effect, will agree to the words of the old chant scholar, R. Schlecht: Ghastly harmonies are brought to light.

If such is the case, how can the chant so accompanied be pleasing? I ask, however: Must Gregorian chant be harmonized in this way? Certainly not. It is ever so much more possible to fulfil the requirements which I laid down elsewhere when I wrote:

> If an accompaniment is used, it should be one that adds its own beauty and value to that of the melody, thus making the whole more impressive and artistic. This can be accomplished without divesting the melody of its primacy.

The practical conclusions to be drawn from the preceding remarks and conditions referred to are plainly evident. Would that they be drawn once and for all!

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CLASSICISM AND BANKRUPTCY

By CRAIG LADRIÈRE

IN THE panic of our time, the evenings we spend with friends are often dull, since the usual talk is wholly of the crisis: not more, of course, than to ask how deep we have been caught, and to repeat some anecdotes to show the dreadful shape of things; for there are few, in most gatherings, who might possibly turn affairs. And if the poems which are published nowadays were long enough to keep one a whole evening, those would be as dull evenings as the others. Not just because the poems are bad, though they are bad commonly, but because they share with our more boring friends the sociological preoccupation; I don't need to say that their sociology is as poorly considered as your least remarkable acquaintance's.

You may say that if these poets have convictions, that is good, let the matter rest. But I am thinking of something else. I should not attempt to persuade Mr. Auden, for example, the English poet, to write verses different from these:

> It's no use turning nasty
> It's no use turning good
> You're what you are and nothing you do
> Will get you out of the wood
> Out of a world that has had its day . . .
>
> Your son may be a hero
> Carry a great big gun
> Your son may be a hero
> But you will not be one
> Go down with your world that has had its day,

which are printed in the first issue of the little English magazine, *New Verse*. It is obvious that those lines, certainly better than most parts of the "Song" from which they are taken, are badly conceived and poorly contrived; nevertheless, if there is conviction, let that be.

But I would not have come to the typewriter if I did not feel a kind of duty to reassure a man who, though he may not exist, if he does must be unknown to me; and since his being unknown may be a consequence of the condition of literature in our age, and that possibility is a chief problem for our criticism, unacquaintance is no excuse for silence. The man is young. He is a poet, or in another age would be.

I should like to say this to him: there is a possible reader for you, and I believe there are many, who do not ask, as the condition of calling you a poet, that all your verse be economics or mechanics. If we "belong to a world that has had its day," we are not the first, probably not the last, for the fate. It is interesting, pressing; poets may find it so, and so find in it matter for poetry. But they need feel no imperious compulsion. And when so many pages have been ruined, only by a perverse conscience which forbids a young poet to evade the issues of our accidental ambience, it is time that readers point to essential issues, not urged, apparently, by the queer conscience. Humanity has not had its day. Your job is hard right now; it will only be harder, and more calculably futile, if you strain at expressing your age.

The spirit of an age is neither so difficult for the poet to embody, nor so important, that it should be permitted the destruction of a minor poet. When it is embodied, that is never done by intention, but always by accident, or, for we must remember Mr. Eliot, incident. Then, there is something absurd in a man's setting out to phrase an epoch. It is proud, for the highest genius is needed; and evidently immature, since an artist is better occupied. Dante, who could not have avoided expressing his age, would never have thought of trying to do so. Why? Because it would not have seemed to him important enough.

The trouble today is one of tradition, of course. It comes, in practice, to this: when Pope said, "Tomorrow I shall write a poem," if he ever said that, he knew precisely what he meant, and his friends knew very approximately. But if a young man should think, nowadays, for he would never utter, the same sentence, he would be covered with an immediate sweat. He has no idea what a poem is, at least of the kind that should be written tomorrow. Nor have his friends. They browse over his table when they visit him, and ask, "Do you call this poetry?" of Mr. Eliot's last published piece. The young man is militant for his master in a minute; but helpless for himself.

Classicism is a word much in vogue. And a great deal of our lesser verse has a flavor partly of republican Rome, partly of London some time after Pope's death. It is possible that to arrive at its classicism modern poetry will recapitulate backward the progress out of classicism made in the late eighteenth century; I don't know. But classicism is an ism only phonetically, and while it is encouraging to hear the word used freely, there is no encouragement in the danger that it may be no more than a shibboleth. So far, the conscious "classicists" have given little sign that there is no such danger. The undefined new "classicism" has not relieved the young poet; but his phobia must be exercised before we get good poetry again.

The phobia is quite non-classicist; and there is no doubt a routine of true classical theory, cautiously pondered, will eradicate it. The young poet must forget claptrap, even the claptrap of "classicism," and see broadly enough to find a foundation, in what is classical. Whereas he imagines that his tomorrow's poem must be entirely different from poems already written (including—this is his special misfortune—those of

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Eliot and Father Hopkins), the theory of classicism expects that it be more like than unlike other poems. Here it is a question of knowing what is essential to any poem, and what is accidental in the poems we happen to have. Whereas he is convinced that the requisite novelty may be achieved by intense concentration on the circumstances of his period, it is the theory of classicism that the poet must occupy himself with the universally valid, not the particular and the problematical. Here the poet's function is one of criticism, discrimination.

This function is preëminently forced by classicism because of its sane inclusiveness. To classical theorists, the poet is also a man, and none of the necessary distinctions which they make obscure that unity. Classicism is not a style, but an attitude; and any attitude about art must be, or shortly become, a moral and metaphysical attitude. "Beauty," Professor Santayana said a little while ago, "being a good, is a moral good; and the practice and enjoyment of art, like all practice and all enjoyment, fall within the sphere of morals." This is not to say that the criterion of aesthetic judgment is purely moral; but that, once made, an aesthetic judgment is a moral judgment too. There is more to it than that, for the practising artist must have made some specifically moral, and metaphysical, judgments before he can make essential artistic ones. It is not a question of accepting one's age, but of inquiring what aspects of the life of one's age are acceptable.

And that inquiry may never reach the paper; its result may never reach the paper. Experience is personal. Poetry is not. But poetry is founded in experience, and experience ought, in a mature person, to have reduced its chaos to axioms. As these give an equilibrium to a man's life, their implicit presence balances a poet's work. It is not usual that that work be to make them explicit, and when it is the balance is not easier but harder to keep. Too many poets now are making an effort, perhaps in emulation of one aspect of classical poetry, at this explicitness; what they are trying to make explicit, I may continue, is a fragmentary and orderless experience which they have not troubled to distil. Their writing must lack value, for their effort requires great powers when its material is organized, and their material is disorganized. It will not do to snarl or whimper, kicked by the age; it will not do to roar. Reactions alone are of no importance, what is reacted to is of no importance. What is important is the controlled personality that reacts; and its balanced utterance, in formal design.

Such utterance and such design possess the accent and the stroke of their environment; inevitably. We can't avoid contemporaneity, if we have not avoided the more important things. Not every poet gets his age into his work; few do, and it is really disputable whether any poet has. But every poet gets as much in, if he writes poetry that is good, as any reader demands; and almost any age is well represented by a selection from its minor poets. Being contemporary is a thing the young poet ought not to worry about; the chances are all that he will fail by being too contemporary. He should read the classical poets who have written already, specially those who have seemed to some people least classical, like Dante and Chaucer, and in our immediate past, Mr. Wallace Stevens; he should think of poetry as what they have written, not as something he must begin; so far as his age is concerned, he should see that to delight it, Dryden's "chief endeavor," is not just to echo its fatuity; and in giving the age his particular delight, his job is also to pass, humbly or magnificently, the particular and come to the universal.

Under the discipline of classicism, properly understood, his morbid sense of bankruptcy should lose its acuteness; classicism can keep him above panic whether in life or in writing, though on the condition of discipline. *Klassik ist das Gesunde.*

YOUNG IRISH WRITERS

By PEADAR O'DONNELL

THE ANGLO-IRISH school of writers is passing. We are just on the edge of a period when Irish life will find its way into literature, written in English, but of Ireland for Ireland by Irish writers. It is, I think, this group of writers who work on Irish material that will come increasingly into prominence in the immediate future. It is they who will preserve the distinctiveness of Irish literature in the English-speaking world, although it may be true that individual Irishmen of even greater genius will work on material mainly outside Irish life. I do not see how this latter group can eventually be known or thought of except as part of the general world of English literature. I would not corral Irish writers within the bounds of a purely Irish setting for their work nor urge them to break through into new worlds. I am just stating the things that I see.

The literature of the Irish school, writing in English, will reveal the English language in new color and growth. What Ireland achieves in this way, however, is not unique, and a study of it should not be separated from that of similar happenings in other lands. The habits of mind and life of small nations generally, and of submerged peoples in particular, are now unfolding more and more into their literature and many well-etched notions of inner living and outer habit are withering in this new light.

It is, I think, true that when a subject nation gradually adopts the language of a powerful neighbor unwillingly, the new language remains nervously balanced on the new lips and takes on new life. The English spoken in the coast areas of Ireland today is a good example. In the older generation words are placed like stepping-stones, with a scarcity and selectiveness. In the younger generation the scarcity is gone, but the selectiveness remains. The minds that reveal themselves continue to be in danger of being misunderstood by even well-intentioned observers; indeed, well-intentioned people have been the cause of many of the wrong notions of small nations that have crept into circulation in the world.

The transition period into a new language is bound to be marked by unusual forms of speech. A genius that has not been cradled in the inner experiences that go with such a process cannot really see, behind these quaint phrases, the sharp and exact thoughts that are fumbling for language. So it happens that the transition English in Ireland has been invaded with

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psychological values that have no resting place in the minds out of which the words grew; slovenly and adventurous standards of measurement have come into use in psychological matters, anyway, and quackery, which has been flood-lit by science along many of its old trade routes is still able to escape into great areas of mist here. What happier hunting ground than the quaint phrasing of a new language on the lips of an imaginative people?

Irishmen writing in English may seem to be unkind to the Anglo-Irish school. It will be said, and with truth, that there was genius in that school and that out of it generous sympathy and the searchlights of great intellect surveyed Irish life; but did any man ever see the thing he just surveyed? Vivid impressions alone open windows into life and it is only out through such windows a man may gaze and his genius uncover new depths. Now, the literature of small nations has mostly proceeded from minds to which life had not given the experiences to open the windows. It represented sympathetic listening and looking, but it was not a voice out of the ferment of the living. Its beauty was too beautiful; its ugliness was too ugly; for its beauty and its ugliness were deductions, discoveries, not revelations.

There are new writers who are revealing the Ireland of this day and of the immediate yesterday. They will be much more easily accepted by their countrymen than was the Anglo-Irish school that preceded them. Some resistance to interpretation is inevitable in a small country fighting its way out of slavery. The outcry that greets occasional books in Ireland proves how sharply feelings will be aroused in this process of creating a new literature, but the murmur of the throng is with the artist whose work breathes of their lives.

Gaelic standards of life have been so long smothered among us that they have been forgotten among that stratum of our people, who by virtue of their power to buy education think themselves qualified to shape our culture. To them literature should be an enamel to conceal life. Their arid pens control the newspaper offices. They strive to enforce their view of what Irish literature should be to conceal what Irish life is. No drearier waste of buffoonery has been crossed by pioneer writers anywhere than what confronts those who would reveal the Ireland of today in books that are to circulate freely among the people. Vigilance Committees guard Irish libraries against Irish writers, and an old woman fussiness sifts even the rubbish permitted there on its way to the public.

Now, the fact is, life in Ireland among the common people has great vitality and resilience. There is great greed for contact with the currents of world thought, with power to bend into Irish forms what our people's genius selects, but our cultural supervisors have as little contact with that genius as they have with the literature of the world. They are bewildered when authentic voices speak out and they fuss around new books the way a poor bewildered hen might race around a pond wherein the ducks she had been tricked to hatch out splash around.

Young Ireland is good-natured about it. But, this brood-hen fussiness gets noised abroad now and then and makes folk at a distance wonder what exactly is happening in the literary world in Ireland. There is great to-do about our censorship of books. I daresay, Ireland differs little from other nations in this respect, for Irish youth censor books before allowing them into the hands of their old folk, and I am convinced that is the most real censorship in the world today. It is quite true, however, that Irish youth is without guidance in its search for good literature, and that our libraries are skim milk. But, this is not a direct result of the official censorship but of the destructive aridity of Irish middle-class life which guards our libraries. I do not know to what extent the official censorship is an inconvenience to the book trade, but it certainly does not prevent the circulation of books. I think that the sharp ear of the great mass of plain people out of whom the new literature is arising are quickly catching the Gaelic note our schoneenized middle-class are unable to understand, and that they will sponsor our new writers.

For the new literature will shock many, just because it is informed with Gaelic values of life. The aftermath of English puritanism lives on in Ireland as an invasion of rugged language with a sickly varnish. The Gaelic mind has a withering contempt for words that come out of the side of the mouth. It is inherent in the genius of our people to say what they see and think. Their literature will bear this mark. It is no more characteristic of them to delay, to sermonize or gloat, over diseased pockets of life than to shirk lighting them up with direct language; they see, say and pass on. That, too, will be a feature of the new literature. Within it all will be the vibration of great, urgent living, and essential health of body and mind.

It may be argued and with some justification, that there is a tendency to overemphasis of the directness of speech that marks Irish life; that there is an overemphasis of Rabelaisian expressions. The sincerity of our artists will correct that. We are on the edge of great literary achievement in Ireland, and it is the duty of those journals that have not shut themselves out from the fermentation out of which these voices come to give space to the message, even when the message itself is a bit bewildering. Ireland is all right, and the youth of Ireland is a great youth.

Litany to Light

Spindrift from the starry rapids,
Foaming sun and flashing comet,
  Fail us not who stand in shadow.

Lash of Leonid and lightning,
Swift flail of the luminous meteor,
  Sting our sight who stand in shadow.

Semaphore across the morning,
Noonday bloom and trellised twilight,
  Give us beauty in the shadow.

Luster of the burnished beetles,
Feather sheen, wing iridescence,
  Silken this dull cloth of shadow.

Flicker of the northern streamers,
Ghostly sheeting of the snowdrifts,
  Chill us not who stand in shadow.

Death script over darkling battle,
Glimmer of forsaken windows,
  Spare us grief who stand in shadow.

Lucifer's lost gift of glory,
Lead us back by glossy traces
  To thy Source, the end of shadow.

CLIFFORD J. LAUBE.

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THE PLAY

By RICHARD DANA SKINNER

For Services Rendered

SOMERSET MAUGHAM, whose capacity for understanding seems at times to be limited to neurotics, has written a curiously inept play about a theme that deserves superb and rich treatment. The theme, in its broadest scope, is what war does to its direct and indirect victims.

The particular play Mr. Maugham has written about this theme concerns the effect of the Great War upon a particular family in a small country town in England. The time is the present, fifteen years after the close of the official war. The father of the family is a pompous country lawyer whose life is geared to painful platitudes and obvious attitudes. The mother is a patient and ineffective soul who discovers during the course of the play that she is dying of cancer. A war-blinded son wanders around with his knitting and manages, according to his own confession, to stir up enough sympathy to be made comfortable. (His confession is, of course, ironic.) One of the three daughters, whose fiancé was killed in the war, waits on this brother and becomes, according to the author, a sex-starved old maid. She goes insane after hearing of the suicide of an ex-naval officer to whom she has just vainly proposed marriage. The second daughter is married to a blustering tenant farmer whom she learned to love when he still wore the glamor of a uniform. He now drinks heavily, and their union yields at best only a negative happiness. The youngest daughter, who was under ten when the war ended, watches the developments around her with increasing alarm. In the end, she runs off with an elderly married man, partly by way of escape, partly to snatch some of the pleasure she feels life owes her.

Quite aside from the incredibility of the tale—for it is not a universal and therefore credible experience to have so many things happen to one small group of people—Mr. Maugham has smeared nearly every incident of the play with destructive pessimism and a philosophy of superlative selfishness. The mother, for example, sheds all sense of responsibility once she discovers the nature of her disease, even urging her brother, who is also her doctor, to end her illness before she begins to suffer too much. At one moment, I thought she was assuming this attitude to comfort her blind son and make him feel that she was almost happy at the prospect of dying and escaping from her anxieties. Later, however, she carried this same strange indifference to doing nothing to prevent her youngest daughter from running away with her middle-aged lover.

Another instance is the suicide of the ex-naval officer. He has made a complete failure of business, in spite of having been a decorated war hero who was once in command of a torpedoed ship, and is not only unsuccessful in borrowing money, but issues bad checks which make him liable for criminal prosecution. His "way out" is hardly the way of courage. The eldest daughter's insanity also seems to carry a deeper implication than the results of enforced spinsterhood. One can sympathize with her intensely and still acknowledge the fact that she has no power of resignation. She is in a constant state of neurotic rebellion at her fate. The youngest daughter, for all the terror she is entitled to draw from the self-pitying family about her, remains primarily a selfish girl determined to have her own share of things without counting costs to herself or to others. She does not love the man she runs away with, nor does she particularly care whether he remains faithful to her or not. It is not security she is seeking, but pleasurable escape.

Thus most of the characters of the play are shot through with the pessimism and the disillusionment which the war eventually brought to unanchored minds, and minds without a compass. Mr. Maugham might plead that he was merely being objective, that, if the characters have little to recommend them, that very fact in itself is merely a transcript of war's moral devastation. I am not objecting to his implied castigation of war. But I am objecting to a treatment of a great theme which narrows down its comment to a small group of unskilfully contrasted types living in a small area where the "man shortage" problem is acute and, specifically, to people who have little of the deep bravery which makes the imposition of war all the more tragic. The play is well acted, with Leo Carroll as the blind brother, Fay Bainter as the daughter stricken with insanity, and Jane Wyatt as the youngest daughter conspicuous for their fine handling of difficult rôles. A special word is also due Lillian Cooper for her sensitive portrayal of the daughter who married the drunken farmer and then made the best of it. (At the Booth Theatre.)

Pulitzer Possibilities

AS THESE words are written, the sedate Pulitzer prize committee is probably nearing its decision for the best play of this season. It is a regular annual game for the critics to badger the Pulitzer judges, but as I have heartily approved their choices of the last two years, I have no just cause for complaint so far. There are, however, two plays which I hope will receive their most serious consideration. One is that charming bit of reminiscence, "One Sunday Afternoon." The other is the biting political tirade known as "Both Your Houses." I would like to add Sidney Howard's little masterpiece, "The Late Christopher Bean," but I am afraid that being an adaptation from a French original will bar it from the eligible list—even though the adaptation meant a complete rewriting and transposing of the play from one laid in France to one nestling in our own New England hills.

My first vote, I think, would go to "One Sunday Afternoon." It was, if you remember, a play that merely sprouted into Broadway's consciousness, coming practically without heralding. The critical praise given it derived neither from sophistication nor from the glamor of any foremost playwright or actor or producer. It was merely a simple and amazingly sincere story of the lives of some humble people. It was also deeply rooted in traditions peculiarly American, and not to be duplicated elsewhere. This, as I understand it, is one of the qualifications supposed to inhere in a Pulitzer prize play. It was also well written and acted with modest grace and deep understanding. It was the kind of play that stays with you for many a day.

"Both Your Houses" is reminiscent, of course, of the satirical impact of last year's prize play, "Of Thee I Sing." But that slight similarity of theme should not disbar it. It actually contains very little satire. In fact, much of its worth comes from the fact that it is in deadly earnest. It exposes a very real menace in our system of national government, one which even the present virile leadership in Washington cannot hope to stamp out permanently. The play does not pretend to offer a way out nor a permanent solution. It merely displays log-rolling, indirect graft and lobbying for what they obviously are, and does so with such clarity and force that it is worth many a tome of solemn pleading. It has humor, characterization and inherent drama. If I put it down as only my second choice, the reason is that "One Sunday Afternoon" is more truly a play of the kind that is never "dated."

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COMMUNICATIONS

AN OPEN LETTER TO PROMINENT CATHOLICS

New York, N. Y.

GENTLEMEN: It is true that our Jewish fellow man has been persecuted by the Hitler government in Germany—to how great an extent or how little is as yet unknown. You have been "deeply moved" and have rushed to put your signatures to protests. You have been eager to take the public platform and denounce the "assaults, robberies and imprisonments."

In view of this: how come your loud silence at the far greater and more widespread persecution of Catholics in Mexico and Spain?

Do you believe that there were no Catholics murdered, robbed and imprisoned in Mexico? Do you believe that Catholic priests were not murdered and that the sacred persons of Catholic Sisters were not violated by undisciplined mobs or individual wretches, but by the soldiery of the Mexican government? Do you believe that Catholic churches and convents were burned, their flames lighting up the sky over Spain? Do you believe that the Jesuits were banished from Spain by the government? Do you know that the government of Spain has taken over the Catholic churches, the property of God?

To what an extent will you acquiesce in persecution of Catholics in other lands before your peculiar sense of Americanism allows you to call on your fellow Americans to protest in the name of outraged Christianity and humanity.

Is not your continued silence on Catholic persecution, in view of your protests against Jewish persecution on a much smaller scale—so much smaller that there is no comparison—tantamount to a denial of faith?

And was not your silence inglorious enough, but you had to give expression to the following in a protest which some of you signed in conjunction with a large number of Americans of other faiths? This protest sent to the Hitler government contained embodied in it—read it and weep:

"We appeal to them to prevent their attacks against all that civilization has gained for tolerance and understanding since the Dark Ages."

Signed by one who is a Catholic but not in the possession of "money," the only necessary qualification of "prominence" in Catholic or other circles in America.

STEPHEN W. JOHNSON.

LET CATHOLICS TAKE WARNING!

Chicago, Ill.

TO the Editor: After reading your very truthful and intelligent editorial, I cannot but wonder how the epitaph, "In union there is strength," would not apply.

One reason why the Catholic people cannot create a widespread admiration for our downtrodden people is the many demands on our depleted purses; there is nothing left to spend in making ourselves heard by our intolerant brethren. In comparison with the Protestants we are a small group, but we have a heavier load to carry.

By way of making myself clear: On the South side in a very small area there are three high schools and four grammar schools (within a radius of five miles, and that's stretching it). Why, even the great metropolitan city cannot pretend so close a high school burden, with so many contributing to its support. Now here's where my rule of "In union there is strength" would work. Why not have only one school for the entire South side and decrease the cost to a pupil? At present it runs: school tuition, $10.00; lunch, $.20 a day, about $1.00 a week; carfare; then the ever-increasing burden of tickets every day for something. The cost to an ordinary salary, irrespective of one's parish obligations, is appalling. Why so many high schools, with financial and social rivalry, and high debts?

I have among my acquaintances families who don't have a decent covering for their bodies, just to keep up their children in these schools. Will they thank them? A thousand times, "No." They are ashamed of them because they cannot take their place in the social world on account of their appearance, and child and parent grow away from each other.

Now, understand me. While I am a devout Catholic, a generous giver, I've just reached the saturation point. When I read your article, I thought there was food for thought in it, and so wonderful and well written and edited a paper should and must have a place in our life and every-day reading. It is so full, so noble and so tolerant of all classes.

But when children must and do demand so much from their parents, who can't afford to respond, the morale of a child is stunted and hurt if they can't meet the demands they are brought up, trained, to demand—pay, pay. Our only hope is in united Catholic education: not how many schools, but fewer and better, so that constant begging and demanding will be gone forever, and many whose parents cannot count or match the dollars with Lizzie's parents won't be frowned on. That day will Catholicity see the light and not until then.

A READER.

RESPONSE FROM CHINA

Yungshunfu, Hunan, China.

TO the Editor: Your splendid letter of January 24 has finally caught up with me here in this far-flung sector of the interior of China. In fact, has moved me to hurry off a few lines to assure you that I have already, if rather recently, renewed my subscription to your good magazine.

I would liked to have given THE COMMONWEAL the encouragement and tribute of a swift renewal. Truth to tell, the whole reason of my belated renewal is partly to the widespread depression and financial stringency in the states. I would like to point out here that my delayed renewal should not be interpreted as unsympathetic or uncomplimentary to your publication. The whole truth is that I am an ardent admirer of your excellent magazine. I wish THE COMMONWEAL the swift and full realization of its editor's ambitions and dreams!

A little incident that will, I think, be of interest to you. Some five or six months past, I went up to Peiping, North China. Whilst there I became acquainted with a few of the members of the Lytton Commission, who at the time had just returned from Manchuria. On one occasion I had the blessed opportunity of showing them your remarkably fine leader on the Sino-Japanese embroglio in Shanghai—or was it on Manchuria? Be that as it may, their comments would, I know, make your good heart happy. One of the remarks reflected precisely my appreciation of THE COMMONWEAL: "intellectual sympathy towards the subject in hand; and correct factual data." I felt proud of our Catholic weekly.

As rather becomes a humble missionary laboring in these primitive outposts of civilization, let me not leave the impression that I move in high intellectual or social circles; the contrary, I assure you, is my natural and normal level.

Again let me hark back to the first purpose of this rather rambling letter. A word of encouragement and good-will. A world of success to THE COMMONWEAL!

REV. RONALD NORRIS, C.P.

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PROHIBITION FORTY YEARS AGO

Chicago, Ill.

TO the Editor: May I tell an incident which occurred over forty years ago when Kansas was supposed to be dry? It was my first introduction to prohibition and the memory has always remained.

My father had taken me on a little trip with him, and a Sunday morning found us in Kansas City. We are about to return to Chicago when he said, "I want to call on the Bishop on our way to the depot," meaning the Catholic bishop of that city.

As we stepped into the hack which was at the hotel door my father said to the driver, "I want to stop at the Bishop's on my way to the train. Do you know where it is?"

"Shure I do," said the jehu. "I know it well."

He climbed up to his seat and we set forth. We ambled up one street and down another. It seemed to be the wholesale district.

My father said impatiently, "I don't believe this fellow knows where he is going at all. The Bishop can't live in this district."

Presently we drew up before a four-story red-brick building, plainly a store of some sort but closely shuttered. The driver climbed down and opened the hack door with a flourish.

"Why this can't be the Bishop's," said my father angrily as he looked out.

"Shure it is," said the driver. And then in a whisper he added, "The front door is locked but all you have to do is to go around to the back." It was a speakeasy run by a man by the name of Bishop!

So did prohibition work even in those early days. Further comment is needless.

MARY ONAHAN GALLERY.

ADMISSION TO MASS

Brookline, Mass.

TO the Editor: I recently attended solemn high Mass in the cathedral in one of our largest Northern cities. I asked an attendant what was the customary seat-fee. Twenty-five cents!

I had arrived early that I might be well down front; about the middle of the church, I was halted with others, and motioned backwards; the usher could have offered some explanation but he did not.

So I watched from afar; and I watched particularly one of the six tall candles on the altar that had gone out shortly after the service commenced; and mused on the fact that although there were more than fifty vested attendants within the altar rail, no attempt was made to relight that candle. And on the way out I wondered how many of God's poor can afford to attend high Mass in this stately cathedral.

The Sunday before, I had attended high Mass in a well-known city 1,800 miles to the south; I went as far down front as I wished; and there was no fee collected at the door! I was told later that this was left to the conscience of the laity. No need to worry about God's poor here.

But there was one thing common to both these churches and a third church in Washington, D. C., where I attended the Ash Wednesday Mass, and I suspect there may be many more: not one head was bowed nor one knee bent at the mention of our Lord's name; but perhaps the priests of my youth took their religion too seriously.

JOHN E. HANLON.

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BOOKS

Comparative Eschatology

Life beyond Death, by James Thayer Addison. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. $3.00.

MR. ADDISON, who is a professor at the Episcopal Theological School at Cambridge, Massachusetts, has well accomplished his difficult aim of presenting for the general reader "a brief survey of all the important beliefs about the future life among uncivilized peoples and in the great religions of the world."

The result includes a great deal of authoritative information, that is not easily accessible elsewhere, about this most absorbing aspect of religious beliefs, set forth with clarity and with welcome touches of humor. Mr. Addison is on the whole very objective; he does not, for instance, indulge in forced parallels between Christianity and other religions. Yet he writes inevitably from his own point of view, that of a liberal Protestant, so that his perspective and emphasis, in such matters as the Gospels and the development of Christian doctrine, are not those of a Catholic scholar. His book may be recommended, however, to well-informed Catholics who wish to learn something of other religions.

The conclusions of the evolutionist school are accepted throughout. "If we had to simplify the stages of religion," Mr. Addison writes, "we might roughly group them as three. The first we might name by the word spirits, the second by the word gods, and the third by the word salvation." For evidence that such a generalization needs to be substantially modified, one may consult Father Schmidt's epoch-making "Origin and Growth of Religion." Its author offers a wealth of testimony indicating that monotheism, though childlike, and often antecedent to any definite distinguishing of spirit and matter, is the most primitive form of religion. Like the similar though less-documented theory of Andrew Lang, Schmidt's conclusions were for a long time simply boycotted by evolutionists, but such an attitude is daily becoming more antiquated.

In the special field of primitive beliefs about the after life, Mr. Addison, who regards it as "generally true in the whole range of primitive beliefs, that distinctions after death are not moral distinctions, and do not take the form of rewards and punishments," should weigh the evidence for Schmidt's contrary statement.

In dealing with the Christian doctrine of hell, Mr. Addison scarcely allows their proper force to the words of Our Lord. For though Christ's condemnation of the reprobate to "eternal fire" in Matthew is indeed "harsher" than the corresponding passage in Luke, it is fully equaled by the "unquenchable fire" of which He speaks in Mark, and it is contrasted with a reward that is certainly portrayed as eternal. The liberals cannot find support in any reported words of Our Lord for their "purgatorial" interpretation of hell.

It is surely worth while to consider with some fulness Mr. Addison's treatment of Catholic eschatology. He is obviously anxious to understand and as far as possible to sympathize. His statements are accurate, but a Catholic, writing, so to speak, from the inside, and especially one familiar with the Church's modern theologians, could often have given a more fully rounded account without undue prolixity. Concerning the Catholic doctrine of hell, for instance, it should be noted more emphatically that the damned include only those who, having deliberately and gravely sinned against whatever light they had, have

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obstinately remained in sin. Also that the conception of the damned pleading in vain for mercy has been well described as "the great misunderstanding." Catholic theologians, though holding as revealed by Christ the awful truth that a man by dying impenitent can put himself beyond repentance, realize as fully as the liberals that this fact alone keeps such a man from God.

As to the resurrection of the body, Cardinal Billot and other equally orthodox theologians have held that a body animated by the same soul can be properly regarded as the same body, an opinion which the Church has not condemned, and which resembles that of the modern Protestants mentioned by Mr. Addison.

Furthermore, though the Church has certainly dwelt on the terrors of the Last Judgment, so marvellously described in the "Dies Irae," she has also, in her liturgy, emphasized its joys. "He who is sure of his hope and deeds," says Saint Gregory in a homily used in the Breviary, "opens to Him who knocks, since he awaits the Judge with joy; and when the time of approaching death has come, he exults in the glory of retribution!" And the beautiful Collect for the vigil of Christmas asks that "we who receive the Redeemer with joy may with confidence see Him come as Judge."

There is no doubt, however, that many preachers, particularly in the storm and stress of the late middle ages, have talked as though the fear of God were the end as well as the beginning of wisdom. The antidote, be it said, is a piety more closely related to the sublime serenity and balance of the liturgy.

Mr. Addison exaggerates in stating that Dante is one of the few who have clearly distinguished between purgatory and hell. Many among later theologians, for instance Saint Robert Bellarmine, have spoken emphatically of the joy which accompanies purgatorial suffering. The great mystic Saint Catherine of Genoa, whose teaching was examined and approved before her canonization, wrote that "apart from the happiness of the saints in heaven, there is no joy comparable to that of the souls in purgatory." She also seems to have held that the sole suffering of purgatory is that of separation from God, and the Greeks at the Council of Florence were assured that the Roman Church has never committed herself to belief in purgatorial fire. But here again, preachers have no doubt too often sacrificed discretion to zeal in their descriptions.

The historical origin of indulgences should have been noted by Mr. Addison. This origin shows that the time element is because indulgences were at first remissions of so many days, often of so many Lents, of the old canonical penances. They were thus granted in terms of this world, and their application to the next ceases to seem "mechanical" when it is realized that an unknown purgatorial equivalent is all that is implied by the figures.

"Life beyond Death" ends, as is most fitting, with passages combined from the close of the "Paradiso." Abridgment was necessary, but in one respect it is unfortunate. No doubt because he wished to present Dante's vision in a manner likely to appeal to Protestants as well as Catholics, Mr. Addison omits all mention of Mary. The result is not only the loss of Bernard's supremely beautiful prayer, but a definite maiming of Dante's significance as the supreme poetic expression of Catholicism. She who is "lowly and uplifted more than any creature," though her highest function is to point beyond herself, is neither a detail nor a distraction in the Catholic conception of God's abode.

T. Lawrason Riggs.

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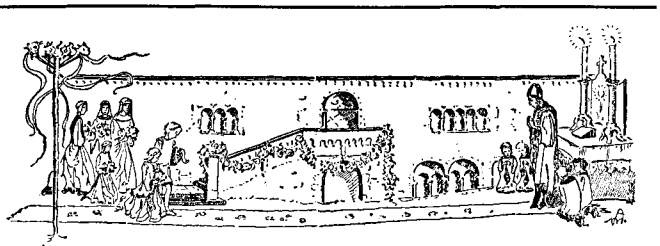

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**ARTHUR PREUSS, EDITOR,
THE FORTNIGHTLY REVIEW.**

16-page descriptive circular sent free upon request.

Untrammeled Poetry

Ships and Lovers, by Thomas Caldecot Chubb. New York: Albert and Charles Boni. $1.75.

MR. CHUBB is an aristocrat of American art, a poet who is a citizen of the world and of the ages. The dream that art in America was to be the synthesis of the various cultures of the various races that have made this country, and, through this synthesis, was to have both an indigenous and a supreme quality, has as a rule been unrealized. Responsibility for this reposes, I believe, not a little on two fallacies of criticism: one, a pedantic attribution of derivations and influences which has made our native artists cringe at so much bosh about themselves by writers who, for all their plausible assumptions, in fact could not know what they were writing about; and two, the know-nothing, deliberate policy of "don't look at them foreign slickers or your rivals in the next town, so people won't be able to say you've copied them." It will be seen that the second grows out of the first and is the opposite extreme to it; salvation, in this case, is a narrow *via media.* Certainly there is no fault in scholarly criticism pointing out similarities in style in the works of various artists; that is an altogether pleasant recognition of common humanities; it is in the attribution of influences that criticism has trodden on uncertain ground, and recognizing itself as a trespasser there, has proceeded belligerently.

Where we have had an artist with a strong native talent who also was happy to observe what other artists, as sincere and eager as himself, had done in the world, he has been no less American and more surely great. Poe is an example, for all his alleged faking of erudition which was simply a combination of journalistic facileness and a touch of Gothic romanticism. Emerson is another example, and Mark Twain, a third. Even Whitman was no cultural isolationist: in his cracker-box philosopher way he was quite aware of, and acknowledged affectionately, his own and his country's contiguous relations in history and at the very moment on our flying globe. Mr. Chubb's work has not yet of course attained the importance of the completed work of any of these men; the thing is, however, he has the flair.

Readers of his "Life of Giovanni Boccaccio" know already of his feeling for Italianate strains of beauty in human expressions and apperceptions. Here in his Italianate poems, both translations and his original poems, he continues in this vein and Mr. Chubb has also an equal sensitiveness for the French genius. And he writes too in terse New England fashion of New England scenes and of the stern business of going to sea. Or again he may turn to the hearty old England. In all sincerity, of my favorites of his poems is one that appeared in THE COMMONWEAL, the "Wild Duck Song." The whirr of wings and the marvellous stillness sometimes over a place of shallow water and rushes, is identified in this poem in a deeply stirring manner. It re-creates the beauty that the poet knew—a sort of thing that every one of us feels at rare exhalted moments—without one word too much to profane it. It simply is, it is left, in its clean perfection. Where Mr. Chubb writes in a skilfully worked, classic form, he would seem to be at his best; his vers libre, to me, has a too facile note. This smallish book, the second or third volume of poems by a poet who is not so obsessed with reacting from his own times that he misses the sweep of enduring, deathless beauty, is perhaps richer with promise than with a summertide of fulfilment. It contains however fine, first-rate poetry.

FREDERIC THOMPSON.

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Count and Countess

The Tragedy of Tolstoy, by Countess Alexandra Tolstoy. New York: Yale University Press. $3.00.

AS PORTRAYED in this horribly fascinating book, the greatest tragedy in Leon Tolstoy's life was his family, and he himself was the cause of the abnormality of almost every member of it. One must conclude that it is because of a lack of a sense of proportion which any well-balanced person would possess that Countess Alexandra Lvovna seems unconscious of the gravity of the statements she makes in this book. How else explain certain pages she has written about her own mother!

In general, the one lasting impression the reader carries away, after having been introduced to this curious Tolstoy family, is the hatred which they all felt for one another. They were impossible people, the offspring of an impossible man, whose very genius constituted monstrosity. The Countess Tolstoy, in spite of fits of temper and hysterics, remains the only sympathetic person among them. And between her husband whom she loved but did not understand, and her children who thought that they understood their father better than she had ever done, it is not at all surprising that the brain of the miserable Countess should also become unsettled. At times even her angelic patience gave way before a daughter who tried to alienate Tolstoy from her, and before the crowd of cheap parasites by whom Tolstoy was surrounded. Among the latter was the too-famous Chertkov, whose only aim in life was to confiscate for his own personal profit writings of the great Russian novelist, whom Turgenev on his death bed had implored to return to the literature he had forsaken in order to assume the part of a prophet and teacher for which nature had never intended him.

Apart from this, the book, although fascinating reading in the same way as a mystery story is fascinating, does not tell anything new in regard to the personality of Tolstoy, and unintentionally it shows him up at times as a selfish old man completely in his dotage. The account of his flight from his family and home presents him to us as an entirely irresponsible being. One therefore wonders why the book was written. To those who have sincerely admired the famous Russian writer, it will prove a distinct shock, while those who have almost forgotten who he was, will simply shrug their shoulders.

As it is, Tolstoy with all his glory is already a figure of the past. This was made evident to me in a story recently related by a man just back from Russia, where he spent six months in research work in the State Archives. He was in the Petrograd Public Library and, seeing a young student absorbed in reading a novel, he asked its name. It was "Fathers and Sons," by Turgenev. "Why don't you read one of Tolstoy's works?" he asked the young man. "Tolstoy?" was the reply. "Tolstoy? Who was he?" *Sic transit gloria mundi.*

CATHERINE RADZIWILL.

Places of Glamor

Quebec, Montreal, Ottawa, by T. Morris Longstreth. New York: The Century Co. $3.00.

TWO of the three cities T. Morris Longstreth writes of so entertainingly—Quebec and Montreal—are places of glamor. In the Western hemisphere, north of Mexico, no names are so redolent as theirs of fortitude, of self-sacrifice, of heroic tradition.

Of Ottawa, the erstwhile village of Bytown, which Queen Victoria selected as the Canadian capital, a man may write as he will, for Ottawa is essentially modern, or, as Mr. Longstreth phrases it in his closing words: "To Ottawa the future!"

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Scholars are apt to murder one another in the discussion as to whether this is G.K.'s first book or not. All agree that it is one of his first two. Anyhow it is now published for the first time in the U. S. A. It consists of highly fantastical lessons in living for old gentlemen—in rhymes, and profuse illustration so as to keep them interested.

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But Quebec and Montreal, to the lover of history, are hallowed ground. There the writer encounters a historic tradition so tenacious and abiding that even a dullard must recognize it as the precious distillation of the life-blood of a people. It is greatly to Mr. Longstreth's credit that he recognizes this basic fact, and in no instance assumes the supercilious attitude so much in vogue among certain American writers. Instead he lifts the curtain with sympathetic hands and unrolls before us the drama of those heroic souls—priest, explorer, trader, soldier and martyr—whose shadows seem destined to lengthen eternally against the Arctic night.

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The chief charm of Mr. Longstreth's book is that he makes this history real to us. We walk with him, for example, down an unfamiliar street; our eyes are dull; we see nothing but a strange street. Mr. Longstreth points to a battered house on the corner and tells a tale to keep us awake o' nights; he points to another and another, with a tale for each, until, presently, the unfamiliar street is peopled anew and we seem to be jostling old friends.

Mr. Longstreth's style is felicitous—sometimes a little more. I quote from page 145: "From Quebec many roads unroll. If they give no wild breaths of exhilaration, they offer an untroubled beauty which sinks deeper, like a soft rain, into the heart."

If this be not literature—where am I to find it?

WILL HOLLOWAY.

Atmosphere

Papa La Fleur, by Zona Gale. New York: D. Appleton and Company. $1.50.

MILK and honey, when they can be had, should no doubt be taken in small doses; in "Papa La Fleur" Miss Gale is wise to give us the milk and honey of the Wisconsin summer countryside in so few pages as she does. There are in it the great trees of Hooker's green, their leaves murmuring with what seems the weight of the sunlight rather than the wind, the rivers moving scarcely faster than the rotund clouds, the gnarled berry-bushes, dusty and content with their complicated stillness by the yellow roadways. Against this background, move Papa La Fleur, seventy-year-old descendant of a *voyageur,* his two daughters, and the daughters' lovers. Their emotions partake of something of the quiet strength of the summer sun; and, again, they are as unreal as this sun recalled in winter, for it is very plainly Miss Gale's vision which beholds the world in which her characters move, not they themselves.

In a book in which the atmosphere were less decided, this would not be of much importance, but in "Papa La Fleur" one is inclined to be faintly irritated with these humans who insist on wandering into one's view; the drone of bees is preferred to the human voice. However, that is not to say that the story of the old man's love for his daughters, his misunderstanding of them as separate beings, and the tragedy which comes to him when he realizes that they are not entirely of him is not moving and—which is unusual—undistorted by the half-futile bitterness which marks so many tales of parent and child.

GEOFFREY STONE.

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Briefer Mention

Inevitable War, by Lieutenant Colonel Richard Stockton, 6th. New York: The Perth Company. $7.50.

IT MAY be stated in advance that Colonel Stockton's book is far too unwieldy, prolix and overwritten to serve the purpose for which it was intended. Boiled down to 250 effective pages, it would be likely to get the attention of many people—which we are quite ready to admit that it deserves. The argument runs pretty much like this: since pacifists are necessarily wrong, as their writings demonstrate, it is the duty of the United States to prepare adequately, as its presidents have uniformly insisted. The only point of this reasoning which is open to criticism is the "word necessarily." Colonel Stockton holds that human error is the source of conflict and that there is no power strong enough to oblige a nation to admit its error. Consequently war is the inevitable court of last appeal. He is quite willing to admit that education may lessen the chances of conflict but feels it will need so long a time that present-day opinion must not reckon seriously with it. Quite conceivably he may be mistaken. If the European powers can dispel the cloud now impending over the Western world and arrive at a settlement of difficulties acceptable to all, it may well be possible that agencies of arbitration will supplant the sword to an extent hitherto unthinkable. But can they? The book which can make an affirmative reply seem reasonable will be the most effective answer to Colonel Stockton.

Democracy in Crisis, by Harold J. Laski. Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press. $1.50.

PROFESSOR LASKI lectured to the students of the University of North Carolina during 1931, and the present volume is a compilation of his addresses. Why, he asks, are democratic institutions losing their effectiveness and value? That the tide is turning toward violent suppression of dissident groups by some dominant "orthodoxy" seems to him very clear. The answers are many, but chief among them is the abiding unwillingness of possessor groups to heed the demands of the time. Mr. Laski's portrait of Europe is gloomy, but his views of the future in the United States are hardly more roseate. The book is like a bitter pill but the medicinal value is unquestionable. We profess not to care for volumes of lectures, but this one is really exceptional.

Everyman's Talmud, by A. Cohen. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $2.50.

THE REVEREND DR. A. COHEN, an English rabbinical scholar, has written a comprehensive and satisfactory summary of Talmudic doctrine. It is prefaced by an excellent introduction; and though the writing is a bit prolix, the book as a whole will serve the student better than any similar manual as yet called to our attention. The type-face is legible but the volume is not unwieldy in size.

The Land of Promise, by Edmond Fleg; translated by Louise Waterman Wise. New York: The Macaulay Company. $2.00.

M. FLEG is a poet, and his book is probably the most affecting treatise yet written to sing the praises of Zionism, despite a tendency to overstress pathos. After a trip to Palestine, he felt convinced that the Jewish nation had at length found a home. But as an individual many ties continued to bind him to France and, beyond it, to Western culture.

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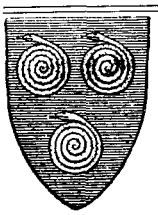

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America: World Leader or World Led?, by Ernest Minor Patterson. New York: The Century Co. $1.50.

PROFESSOR PATTERSON is a very able student of contemporary political problems, so that the present little book, written to set forth in easily understandable terms the position of the United States among the nations of the world, possesses authoritativeness and logical power. It may be, of course, that he remains too much the scholar to reach the widest possible audience. The book opens with a survey of America's status as a result of the war, proceeds to discuss very intelligently the economic and political counter-currents manifest in the world at large, and draws the conclusions that "in such a world as that of thetwentieth century an unqualified economic nationalism cannot succeed."

Elizabethan Love Conventions, by Lu Emily Pearson. Berkeley, California: University of California Press. $5.00.

MRS. PEARSON'S dissertation was expanded into the handbook of nearly four hundred pages offered herewith. She skteches the development of the conventions from troubadour times through Petrarch, and then the use made of them by Elizabethan writers. It has long since been customary to see in English sixteenth-century sonnet and song sequences a "Petrarchan" and an "anti-Petrarchan" trend. Mrs. Pearson endeavors to distinguish critically between them. Her book is a useful and fulsome summary of what has been thought and written on such problems, but one would search in vain for the shred of an original idea or point of view.

The Treasure of Sao Roque, by W. Telfer. New York: The Macmillan Company. $3.00.

SOME time ago Mr. Telfer, a Cambridge scholar, set out to study the history of devotions to Saint Gregory Thaumaturgus and so came upon a box of documents purporting to authenticate relics in the possession of the Jesuits who resided at Sao Roque during the years of the Counter-Reformation. He thereupon proceeded to write the present volume, which is a commentary on those documents. The material has a considerable bearing upon the question of venerating relics—a question so bitterly disputed during the sixteenth century. Mr. Telfer briefly summarizes the controversy and draws inferences which he himself regards as tentative.

CONTRIBUTORS

EDOUARD HERRIOT has been the Premier of France, and is visiting the United States as special envoy. The translation is by Professor L. A. J. Mercier.

REV. JOHN P. MCCAFFREY is chaplain at Sing Sing Prison, Ossining, N. Y.

JOHN MOODY is the president of Moody's Investors Service and the author of "The Truth about the Trusts," "Profitable Investing" and other books.

REV. LUDWIG BONVIN, S.J., is stationed in Buffalo, N. Y.

CRAIG LADRIÈRE is a poet and essayist.

PEADAR O'DONNELL is the author of "The Way It Was with Them."

CLIFFORD J. LAUBE, a former Colorado editor and legislator, is now on the staff of the New York *Times*.

REV. T. LAWRASON RIGGS is the chaplain of the Catholic Club at Yale University.

PRINCESS CATHERINE RADZIWILL of Russia is an author and lecturer, whose latest book is her autobiography, "It Really Happened."

WILL HOLLOWAY contributes fiction, special articles and criticism to various magazines.

GEOFFREY STONE is a writer of criticism for newspapers and reviews.

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